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ESSAYS

MORAL,

PHILOSOPHICAL,

AND

POLITICAL.

(by John Mills)

. . . . . Patriæ sit idoneus, utilis agris,
Utilis bellorum et pacis rebus agendis.
JUVEN. Sat. XIV.

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PREFACE.

IT has long been acknowledged, that the ſpirit of ſyſtem is one of the greateſt obſtacles to the progreſs of our knowledge. It is by ſo much the more ſo, if the ſciences of which it lays hold embrace a vaſt field, and reſt the ſolidity of their principles on the experience of many ages. The precipitate deſire to combine, in a ſyſtem, all the truths which concern the immenſe extent of a ſcience, makes men adopt arbitrary *data*, which will be exploded by poſterity.

I VENTURE

I VENTURE to rank morality, and the politics, among thoſe complicated ſciences, which advance but ſlowly towards perfection. Founded upon the experience and obſervations made on mankind, the diſcloſing of their principles can only be expected from a continued analyſis.

IT is given to none but ſuperior geniuſes, which appear ſo rarely, to carry this analyſis very far at once, and to combine facts ſufficient to deduce from them at the ſame time a great number of truths. Other thinkers are deſtined to collect ſome ſcattered materials for the uſe of future architects, who may erect a regular building.

MOREOVER, a methodical work, which

which contains the whole of a ſcience, neceſſarily requires a multitude of repetitions. But men of a lively genius, who go upon the diſcovery of unknown countries, are diſguſted with traverſing for a long time diſtricts they are well acquainted with, to arrive in the end at a hidden corner, which has till then eſcaped their obſervations.

THESE reaſons induce me to believe, that writers on morality, and thepolitics, would do the public greater ſervice, in forgetting for a while the uncertain glory of ſyſtem-makers, and contenting themſelves, if they think they perceive ſome new combination, with treating their ſubject in ſmall detached eſſays. The reader would

would then be no longer liable to the diſguſt of ſeeking for a little, that might be new amongſt a heap of worn-out materials; and yet he would enjoy the advantage of finding the author's propoſitions cloſe to the neareſt links, which hold each other immediately in the univerſal chain of truths.

It is the province of true philoſophy to guide the writers in this undertaking. It is ſhe that inſpires the ſalutary miſtruſt of beaten tracks, and old opinions; that gives the courage to think for one's ſelf, and that teaches the way to do it with ſucceſs. One cannot encourage too much the introducing of the philoſophic ſpirit into morality and politics,

litics, from which it was almoſt baniſhed, and in which it has of late made a progreſs beyond our hopes.

THE eſſays which I now offer the public, and thoſe which I may perhaps hereafter, are written according to the idea I have formed to myſelf of the advantage of works of this kind. I have endeavoured to connect ſome truths hitherto little eſtabliſhed, with thoſe that are already well eſtabliſhed, and to enable the reader to judge, at one view, what we do know of a ſubject, and what ſtill remains to be known. Meditation, enlightened by facts, has been my only clue: I know not whether I have been anticipated by

by other writers in my way of conſidering theſe objects, and have room to doubt it.

As to the reſt, it is not without heſitation that I have hazarded ſome opinions contrary to thoſe which are generally received, and which are looked upon as demonſtrated. I do not think I have adopted theſe ſentiments, without producing proofs, which to me ſeem good. If I have been miſtaken, I comfort myſelf with the reflection, that men muſt neceſſarily paſs through many errors to arrive at a little truth.

CONTENTS.

ESSAY I.

Page

Of Philoſophy and Philoſophers - 1

ESSAY II.

Of Projects - - - - - - 51

ESSAY III.

Of Love and Jealouſy - - - 113

ESSAY IV.

Of Commerce and Luxury - - - 191

ESSAY V.

Of Agriculture - - - - - 271

ESSAY I.

OF

PHILOSOPHY

AND

PHILOSOPHERS.

Non ut plerique, ut nomine magnifico ſegne otium velaret; ſed quo firmior adverſus fortuita Rempublicam capeſſeret, doctores ſapientiæ ſecutus eſt. TACITUS.

OF

PHILOSOPHY

AND

PHILOSOPHERS.

WHATEVER is diſtant from us in point of time and place ſtrikes our imagination, and inſpires us with ſentiments of reſpect. We magnify objects in proportion as they are removed from our view. Like a benighted traveller, who, by the feeble glimmering of the declining day, fancies every thing he ſees at ſome diſtance to be gigantic and terrible; ſo we behold the antients only in an exaggerated light.

THIS reſpect and admiration are ſtrengthened and increaſed by our education. The firſt works that are put into our hands, are thoſe of ſome of the antients: they are ſet before us as models: we are taught to reverence them even to a degree of idolatry. This veneration often fills us with a blind deference for their opinions: we adopt the eſteem or contempt which they fix on different objects.

ACCUSTOMED to mould our ideas on thoſe of the antients, whence comes it that our idea of philoſophers is entirely different from theirs? It is well known how highly they eſteemed philoſophy, and thoſe who cultivated it. Nothing was more reſpectable than the character of a philoſopher, nor any employment more illuſtrious in their eyes, than that of philoſophy.

THERE is not a more vague expreſſion at preſent than to ſay of a man, he is a philoſopher: it often proceeds from the contempt

contempt we would caſt on him. We figure to ourſelves, under this appellation, a wild uncouth being, deeply immerſed in trifling ſpeculations, abſorbed in futile reſearches, uſeleſs to ſociety.

Some modern politicians go ſtill farther. They lay many diſorders of the ſtate to the charge of the ſpirit of philoſophy. According to them, it favours luxury, the arts, the idle claſs of the people, and confines population. A philoſopher, in their eyes, is not only an uſeleſs member of the community, but even a bad citizen.

Let us inquire into the cauſes of theſe contradictory judgments, ſo little conſiſtent with our bias in favour of the manner of thinking of the antients. Let us, to that end, run over the different ſtages of philoſophy in it's progreſs down to us; it's connections with the manners, the government, the religion of nations; and the influence it has always had upon the happi-

neſs of individuals, and of ſociety. We may then ſee, whether it deſerves it's antient ſplendor, or the contempt to which the moderns ſeem to condemn it.

The moſt diſtant ages repreſent philoſophers to us as the chiefs and legiſlators of their reſpective countries. But the obſcurity and uncertainty which envelop the beginning of hiſtory, prevent us from knowing the nature of their philoſophy. We are ignorant of the ſtate of the ſciences in that epoch ſo near their birth.

In theſe infant republics, thoſe among the citizens who had the cleareſt notions of morality and politics, acquired ſo much authority as to poſſeſs themſelves of the government, and function of giving laws. Little knowledge was ſufficient to be diſtinguiſhed amongſt an ignorant people, and to rule over them.

One hardly dares reckon thoſe antient legiſlators, thoſe old ſages of Greece, among the number of philoſophers. The uncertain

monuments

monuments which now remain of their knowledge, give us no very high opinion of them. They are, for the greater part, common-places, which would not be allowed to paſs from the moſt ordinary man in more enlightened ages.

One only exception can be made, and that is in favour of the famous Zerduſt or Zoroaſter, whoſe underſtanding ſeems to have been greatly ſuperior to that of the firſt philoſophers of Greece. Apoſtle of the religion the moſt reaſonable, and the beſt adapted to the happineſs of a State, that man left to nature can deviſe; legiſlator and reformer of a mighty nation; author of one of the beſt and moſt antient works now in being; he deſerves a diſtinguiſhed place among the benefactors of mankind. After ſo many ages, Perſia to this day enjoys the fruit of that knowledge, virtue, and induſtry, which he inculcated in his followers.

By the help of time, and many ſuperior geniuſes,

geniuſes, the ſciences branched out, and knowledge increaſed. The laws then became leſs ſimple, and the affairs of government more numerous, more complicated, more difficult. No man either could or would combine the ſciences with buſineſs, unleſs poſſeſſed of a very extraordinary genius. The ambitious aſpired to employments: the man of a more peaceable diſpoſition cultivated his mind, and communicated his knowledge to his fellow-citizens. The philoſopher began to ſet up for himſelf.

NOTWITHSTANDING this ſeparation of profeſſions, the philoſopher never loſt ſight of the active life. States often intruſted the command of armies, the management of negociations, and the duties of the magiſtracy, to men who had acquired reputation and knowledge by philoſophy: kings often made them their friends and counſellors. The names and lives of Xenophon, Plato, Epaminondas, Dion, Carneades, and many

many other illuſtrious perſons, are too well known to be cited as inſtances of this truth.

THOSE among the Greeks, who did not devote themſelves to the ſciences, formed themſelves at leaſt under theſe philoſophers. Ageſilaus, Alcibiades, Phocion, Timotheus, Pericles, Philopœmon, are not leſs famous for their philoſophical endowments, than for their actions.

THE corruption of the government of the Greek republics baniſhed the ſages from public affairs. They thought it unbecoming a reaſonable man to lead ſo fierce, ſo cruel, ſo fickle, ſo ungrateful an animal, as the people. Sects of philoſophers were formed, who, in the ſhade of private life, made wiſdom their only ſtudy, without regarding the diſtracted public.

THE age of Alexander's ſucceſſors, that age ſo enlightened, ſo like our own, called them back to light, to the court, and to the adminiſtration of ſeveral kingdoms. But moſt of them, fearing the ſhocks to which

thoſe

thoſe weak governments were expoſed, preferred the private ſtation. A certain ſpeculative ſpirit already poſſeſſed theſe imaginations tranſplanted into or born in the hot climates of the eaſt.

This defect, joined to a taſte for idle diſputations, which prevailed among the Greek philoſophers of thoſe times, is, I think, the true cauſe of the difficulty with which philoſophy gained admittance among the Romans: an ambitious people, who, intently bent upon affairs of the greateſt import, and full of a military ſpirit, diſdained a knowledge, the end of which ſeemed to be, to bring them back to repoſe, tranquility, and a private life. Theſe republican ſpirits ſcorned every thing that could extinguiſh ambition, or abate their courage.

Philosophy, when better known, ſoon cleared herſelf of theſe reproaches and ſuſpicions. Made for action, ſhe formed and embelliſhed the talents of the general and

of

of the ſtateſman. The greateſt magiſtrates were often the greateſt philoſophers. Cicero, Cæſar, Lucullus, Scævola, Cato, Varro: how glorious a liſt!

After the end of the republic, whilſt Rome groaned beneath the yoke of a cruel tyranny and military deſpotiſm, we ſtill find philoſophers among the great men of the empire. The mind is agreeably relaxed by meeting in the courſe of thoſe fatal ages, the lives of a Seneca, a Ruſticus, a Thraſea, a Tacitus, a Pliny, a Plutarch.

Even in theſe dregs of antient Rome, philoſophy produced two phænomena, unfortunately very rare ones. Two imperial philoſophers adorned the throne and philoſophy. Marcus Aurelius and Julian proved by their example the truth and propriety of Plato's opinion. The happineſs of the people never was in hands more worthy to govern.

Whilst the inhabitants of Europe and the neighbouring countries enjoyed this

light, there was in one of the extremities of the earth a great ſtate, unknown to the Greeks and Romans, the conſtitution of which is founded upon philoſophy. The legiſlators of China, by joining together religion, the rules of government, and the precepts of morality, and forming them into one ſingle ſyſtem, made their citizens almoſt a nation of philoſophers. At leaſt all thoſe who govern it are obliged to qualify themſelves by philoſophy for the offices they are to hold. Confucius, the firſt of mortals, the greateſt legiſlator, the greateſt Philoſopher, was himſelf vice-roy of a conſiderable province. The happineſs which he procured to his country, has gained him almoſt divine honours.

WITHOUT adopting the blind admiration of the popiſh miſſionaries in favour of that nation, an admiration which ariſes from their indiſcreet zeal, it muſt be owned that the conſtitution of China affords the fineſt view that men have ever exhibited to their

their fellow-creatures. It proves the admirable effects of ſound philoſophy, upon the ſtrength, duration, and happineſs of a ſtate. If, by the natural conſequence of the inſtability of all human inſtitutions, ſo complicated a machine has been liable to diſorders; we have not, however, any room to doubt of it's goodneſs. It's conſtitution has laſted longer than any other that we know of, and has always had vigour enough to make the conquerors of the nation ſubmit to it's laws.

The unhappy partition of the Roman empire, equally fatal to the public ſafety and to the ſciences, did not however extinguiſh the taſte for philoſophy. Under a weak government, in the midſt of the moſt corrupt courts, and of the moſt bloody revolutions, we meet with great miniſters among the moſt famous philoſophers. Such were Maximus, Longinus, Sopater, Boëtius. Philoſophy penetrated even among the barbarians: Coſrhoës king of

of Perſia, and Theodotus king of the Goths, protected philoſophers, and were ſuch themſelves.

THE climate of hot countries produces a certain ſluggiſhneſs of the ſoul, which makes it averſe to an active life, and leads to contemplation. A deſpotic government, natural to thoſe climates, gave theſe contemplative minds a ſtill greater diſguſt to the embaraſsment of buſineſs, by the dangers it was attended with. A quiet occupation, which gives umbrage to none, is preferable to a miſtruſtful government.

PHILOSOPHY, carried into Aſia and Africa by the Greek colonies, by the ſucceſſors of Alexander, and by the conqueſts of the Romans, was infected with theſe vices of the climate. Thoſe glowing imaginations, thoſe infeebled ſouls, were buſied with nothing but ſubtilties quite foreign to common life. An infinity of ſchools, filled with profeſſors accuſtomed to retirement, haranguing inceſſantly in praiſe

praiſe of the tranquility of the learned, and teaching nothing but idle ſpeculations, ſpread this taſte for contemplation among all civilized nations.

A new religion finiſhed what the force of the climate had begun. Chriſtianity, preſenting inexplicable myſteries and many more obſcure dogmas to be believed, than any religion of the antients, furniſhed abundant food to the ſpeculative minds of the eaſtern people. They employed their time in ſtriving to clear up things which could not be cleared. Conſequently they had never done: their whole lives were a ſeries of ſpeculations.

The chiefs of the firſt perſecuted Chriſtians, far from devoting themſelves to action, were obliged to hide themſelves: when the perſecution roſe to its greateſt height, they were forced to take ſhelter in deſarts. Their example, ſome dogmas ill underſtood and ſtill worſe applied, and conſequences drawn from the monſtrous aſſemblage

aſſemblage of the doctrines of Plato with chriſtianity, made this contemplative life be held in honour. Ideas of the greateſt perfection were attached to it, and monachiſm was eſtabliſhed.

MONACHISM was carried into Europe, and propagated the ſpirit of ſpeculation there. Superſtition raiſed a great number of convents as aſylums for religion, but which ſoon became the receptacles of ſloth and haughty ignorance. The fury of the barbarous nations, which over-ran the Roman empire, reſpected theſe retreats, ſacred in the eyes of the people. Whilſt they deſtroyed the empire and the ſciences, they ſuffered the laſt to take refuge in the convents, where their ſlender remains were preſerved from the farther havock of barbariſm.

BUT theſe monks, ſequeſtered from the world by the rules of their inſtitution, and other circumſtances, ſoon loſt the taſte of true philoſophy. Having no longer the means

means of ſtudying either men or nature, they were reduced to the ſtudy of books: often deſtitute even of that reſource, by the ſcarcity of books, they gave themſelves up to the inclination, which all men have, of creating and being originals. They formed a ſet of arbitrary principles, from which they drew ſubtle and uſeleſs inferences: they framed ingenious and chimerical ſyſtems. All was ſpeculation and ſubtilty. From thence that cloud of Scholaſtics, that crowd of Doctors, whoſe praiſes and titles are equally pompous and ridiculous.

In this interval aroſe an empire, whoſe extent and power ſeemed to promiſe a glorious age. The Arabians, a polite and lively people, adopted the knowledge of the Greeks, as much as their government and religion, equally favourable to ignorance, would permit. They tranſlated, they commented on the works of the old philoſophers; they taught their doctrine in

the ſchools, of which great numbers were ſet up in the dominions of the Caliphs.

THOUGH it does not appear that theſe fiery imaginations ever extended the boundaries of philoſophy, yet the ſtudy of that ſcience gave a great diſtinction to thoſe who applied to it. Among the Arabian philoſophers we find Sovereigns, Vizirs, Governors of provinces; and, what is more, Miniſters, to whom philoſophy was not only an amuſement, but to which they owed their fortune. The hiſtory of the lives and learning of thoſe illuſtrious perſons is, according to the oriental genius, too full of the marvellous and of fables, to bear a minute examination.

AMONG theſe eaſtern philoſophers one cannot however paſs over in ſilence a ſingular phænomenon, a Tartar philoſopher. The famous Ilitchou-Tſai, who governed the empire of the Mogul under Gengis-khan and Otkai-khan, diſtinguiſhed himſelf equally by the extent of his knowledge,

and

and all the qualities neceſſary for a great miniſter. He ſpent his life in cultivating and protecting the ſciences: he was the ſage and the legiſlator of a people, who had never given him an example of theſe talents. After his death, ſeveral treatiſes were found, of his compoſing, upon hiſtory, aſtronomy, agriculture, politics, and commerce.

What we know for certain with regard to the Arabians, is that they have made us a fatal preſent. Chemyſtry, of which the abuſe has been equally dangerous to the philoſophy, the health, and the fortune of the inhabitants of Europe, was invented by them: nor has it even now more ardent followers, than the people of Arabia, Egypt, Barbary, and Morocco.

A Science, an art ſo well ſuited to the ſolitude and idleneſs of convents, met with an extraordinary reception there; and thoſe places became the ſtage of metaphyſical wranglings and chemical operations. This

taſte extended to every claſs. The chemiſts arrogated to themſelves the name of philoſophers, by way of excellence; and that title was no longer given but to a man, who, labouring obſcurely in a ſmoaky hole, ſought the philoſopher's ſtone, or the elixir of long life. True philoſophy was abandoned for chimæras of the Arabians and the ſubtilties of ſchoolmen.

When learning revived, after the tranſmigration of the ſciences conſequent to the taking of Conſtantinople, we ought, one would think, to have reſumed the taſte of the antients for philoſophy. But what happens to people emerging from the obſcurity of barbariſm, happened to us. Words became the object of ſtudy: and the queſtion was, not what the antients ſhould have ſaid, but what they had ſaid. An oſtentatious erudition, which alone was then eſteemed, depreſſed philoſophy, and left her in a ſtate of mediocrity.

Some mighty geniuſes endeavoured to lift

lift her up. Bacon, Deſcartes, Newton, Locke, ſhewed us how ignorant we are of what we think we know, and how much ſtill remains for us to find out. At the ſame time they taught us the true way to attain the knowledge we want; namely, by experience, with due care to draw juſt inferences. They freed us from the yoke of authority, by which genius has been ſhackled for ſo many ages.

THOUGH we have returned to ſound philoſophy, we ſtill are very far from having reſtored her to her antient dignity. The remains of the corruption, to which we have ſeen her expoſed during ſo many ages, yet ſubſiſt among us. The ſpirit of ſpeculation prevails in our ſchools: contemplative timidity, which indiſpoſes them for public affairs, forms the characteriſtic of our philoſophers. Thoſe who are honoured with this name are too often taken up with very trifles. Sovereigns, ſtateſmen, diſdain a knowledge which they

think intended only for the gloom of colleges. The ſublime of philoſophy is not known, and therefore it is deſpiſed.

We ſhall ſee the reaſon of this mediocrity, by examining the ſources which produce it. We ſhall find them in the defects of our education, in the ſtate of our colleges and academies, and in the unjuſt preference given to ſome parts of philoſophy at the expence of the whole. By comparing our method of proceeding with that of the antients, it will not be difficult to ſee on which ſide the advantages lie.

We are educated either at home, or in colleges eſtabliſhed for the bringing up of youth. Our domeſtic education is intruſted to a mercenary preceptor, who inſtils into it all the meanneſs of his own. Theſe generally are young eccleſiaſtics who devote themſelves to this ungrateful ſervice, unjuſtly, but rigorouſly ſtigmatized with contempt by the ſentence of the public; men, who, incapable of aſpiring to higher

higher employments, on account of their ignorance, embrace, for an eaſy livelihood, an occupation which requires a comprehenſive genius, and the greateſt knowledge of man.

The public colleges are ſtill in the hands of eccleſiaſtics. A ſuperficial knowledge of the ſpirit of a body, of a ſtate, of a particular ſtudy, is ſufficient to enable one to judge what effect ſuch an education muſt have. The clergy, formed by theology for retirement and controverſy, inſtill into us that ſpeculative, metaphyſical, and cavilling ſpirit, which is the diſtinguiſhing characteriſtic of their order. They would fain make us good chriſtians: but they render us uſeleſs citizens.

Of which ever kind our education be, whether public or private, our faireſt years are waſted in a laborious and diſagreeable method of learning the dead languages, which we are ſoon to forget; a rhetoric which cannot make us either ſpeak or write

well; a logic, which teaches us to argue like ſophiſts; and a hiſtory, which contains nothing but dates. The preparing us for life, is never thought of: the exerciſes of the body are neglected, to ſtrengthen the mind. Our head is ſtuffed with falſe principles and prejudices. Education ſpoils a greater number of hopeful minds and excellent diſpoſitions, than it rectifies wrong or bad ones.

When our infancy is paſt, we have a ſecond education, which we give ourſelves, and which, in general, being different from and contrary to the firſt, deſtroys or corrects its defects. In countries where the young people enter early into the world, they meet with maxims, principles, knowledge, manners, in ſhort every thing, different from what they had learnt at college. The pedantic learning, with which they had been fed, gives them a diſguſt to the ſciences, which they look upon as uſeleſs. Few, even among thoſe of good

families,

families, know how to diſcover a more wholeſome food: the reſt become the votaries of a blind ambition, of pleaſures, of frivolous purſuits.

THERE are countries where, to put the finiſhing hand to their education, youth are ſent for ſome years to an univerſity. There it is that they complete the ruin of their minds, and loſe all reliſh for the ſciences. Whoever doubts this truth, muſt believe that Gothic inſtitutions are moſt fit for a polite age, and that barbariſm ſaw clearer than the enlightened ages of the world.

CHARLEMAGNE, to extend the empire of letters, ordered the youth to be inſtructed in the cathedrals, and intruſted that care to the clergy of thoſe churches, as to the depoſitaries of the wrecks of learning which had eſcaped the ravages of the northern nations. Thoſe prebendaries, ſoon attending to politics and war, more than to the ſciences, left the inſtruction of

their

their diſciples to men hired for that purpoſe. Little academies were formed. The Popes, ſeeing how much this inſtitution favoured the hierarchy, and the pre-eminence of the clergy, eſtabliſhed it, and loaded it with privileges. The faculties were diſtinguiſhed and ſeparated. Divinity held the firſt rank: the civil law and phyſick followed, but with unequal ſteps. Theſe three faculties only were looked upon as principal ones: philoſophy was but an acceſſary.

To ſee how much this arrangement improves the laſt, one need only figure to one's-ſelf a member of the philoſophic faculty teaching Arabic, Hebrew, Greek, antiquities, a dry and uſeleſs erudition. One need only recollect the honours that have been laviſhed upon the ſubtilties of theology, the intricacies of the civil law, the uncertainty of phyſick, and the dereliction by which philoſophy has been kept under and depreſſed. One need only run

over

over the lives and writings of thoſe doctors, to ſee how little they have contributed towards the advancement of the ſciences.

We owe not to univerſities the few philoſophers who have enlightened us ſince the return of day. Montagne, Bacon, Deſcartes, Newton, Locke, Leibnitz, Shafteſbury, Maupertuis, were formed in the midſt of the world, of buſineſs, of camps. If thoſe great men had ſubjected themſelves to ſcholaſtic inſtructions, their genius would have been ſtinted by the contagious mediocrity of their preceptors.

The ſchools that were formed in France in the beginning of this century, and towards the end of the laſt, for teaching the philoſophy of Epicurus, are a ſtriking proof of this truth. The followers of that philoſophy did not come from the obſcurity of a college: they were all that was great, ingenious, polite, virtuous in the nation, men who united elegance of taſte with heroic virtue, ſublime qualities with the

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ſocial accompliſhments, and who knew how to join literary talents to thoſe that fitted them for the field or cabinet! Of this number were the eloquent Polignac and the wiſe Catinat.

LET us compare our limited education with the extent and ſublimity of that of the antients. A young man put himſelf early under the care of a philoſopher, who was often a ſtateſman, a general. Inſtead of depreſſing both his mind and ſoul by idle ſpeculations, and a timorous morality, the whole converſation with him turned upon the great and uſeful parts of the ſciences. At the ſame time that his mind was cultivated and enlightened, his heart was alſo formed by maxims enforced by examples. Strict care was taken of the purity of his morals, the ſtrength of his body, and the ſtate of his health. Nothing that was lazy or indolent entered into this education: the whole of it tended to an active life; to produce great men and good citizens.

PHILOSOPHERS of the higheſt birth, the greateſt reputation, and adorned with honours and employments, did not think it beneath them to aſſiſt in the education of youth. What does our frivolous age think on ſeeing Ageſilaus educated by Xenophon, Dion by Plato, Alcibiades by Socrates, Phocion by Xenocrates, Philopœmon by Megalophanes, ſeveral illuſtrious Romans by Cicero, Nero by Seneca, Trajan by Plutarch, Zenobia by Longinus! What would they ſay if a Bacon, a Temple, a Catinat, a Shafteſbury had imitated thoſe great men? Place thoſe names over againſt thoſe of our governors, our preceptors, our profeſſors, and then judge of the effects of that difference. Every one does not enjoy the happineſs of a Shafteſbury; we are not all educated by a Locke.

To this depraved taſte in our education and univerſities, there is added a miſtake in regard to the moſt valuable kind of philoſophy. Natural philoſophy takes up too much

much of our time, and the practical is neglected. All the academies of ſciences ring of nothing but phyſical experiments, obſervations upon natural hiſtory: all our philoſophers are but naturaliſts, and, unfortunately, of the lower kind, taken up with trifles, mere curioſities, and nothing more.

We ought with gratitude to acknowledge all the advantages which we owe to phyſical reſearches and natural hiſtory. They have given us new lights in œconomics, arts, and phyſick: we enjoy infinite conveniencies, which are the reſult of application to thoſe ſciences. But, as men abuſe every thing, phyſical inquiries, carried too far, do hurt to philoſophy.

There are branches of knowledge, which require rather time and labour, than genius. Such are natural hiſtory, and particular parts of natural philoſophy. One man cannot ſee every thing: aided by the obſervations of others who have gone before him, he

he may be able to add or improve. We are neceſſarily more learned in natural philoſophy than the antients.

This facility, real, or imaginary, of ſurpaſſing the antients, this hope of being able to ſtrike out ſomething new, induced our learned to apply to the natural ſciences. A number of academicians, deſtined to cultivate them, kept up that ardour. But they have miſſed the right way.

In examining the works of Ariſtotle and Pliny, one is aſtoniſhed at the extent of their knowledge and views: one is ſurpriſed to find a genius prevail in them, which ſeems foreign to natural hiſtory. Theophraſtus's Treatiſe of Stones ſhews us a ſagacity greatly ſuperior to the limited talents of our makers of experiments. Inſtead of imitating thoſe models, the moderns attend only to a fruitleſs detail. We ſee nothing but methods, which have the fate of metaphyſical ſyſtems: one deſtroys and ſwallows up the other, like the ſerpents

pents of the magicians. Our natural hiſtory is but a vocabulary.

It degenerates even into trifles. An extenſive commerce enables us to pick up curioſities in the four quarters of the world. Cabinets are formed. But with what wretched ſtuff are they not often filled? With what face dare we to laugh at a pedantic antiquarian, who hoards up an inſignificant treaſure of mouldy antiques, whilſt we ourſelves make it the buſineſs of our lives to hunt after and arrange butterflies, ſhells, and figured ſtones? Nicole, by way of reproaching Paſcal with having a trifling mind, called him a collector of ſhells. What would he ſay of our runners about the fields, of our collectors of pebbles? Play-things ſhould be only for children: and our pretended philoſophers make them a ſerious occupation.

These reflections are not made with a view of depreciating the ſtudy of natural philoſophy and natural hiſtory, the plea-

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ſure and uſe of which are acknowledged. All talents deſerve eſteem; but in different degrees: literary fanaticiſm abſolutely excludes all knowledge different from it's own. But the fair name of philoſopher is debaſed, by laviſhing it upon the frivolous maker of experiments; upon the blood-beſmeared anatomiſt, the buſily prying botaniſt, the ſooty chemiſt. A maſon is without doubt a neceſſary man in building a palace; but he ought not to uſurp the name of architect: that name, and the regard joined to it, belongs only to the genius that draws the plan, and directs the hands which work under him.

One may ſee by this ſhort compariſon of the antient philoſophy with the modern, whether this laſt deſerves the contempt it has fallen into. One may ſee that the ſtile and manner of our's is not calculated to ſet it off, and that the bad taſte of our pretended philoſophers keeps them from that conſideration, of which they nevertheleſs

are ſo covetous. We may ſee at the ſame time, that the public unjuſtly charge true philoſophy with the defects of the falſe.

THERE are, without doubt, ways to reſtore philoſophy to her antient ſplendor. Without fearing to be called a projector, a name which by no means deſerves the reproachful prejudice of the vulgar againſt it, I ſhall venture to hazard ſome thoughts upon thoſe means.

IT were to be wiſhed that the education of youth was intruſted to abler hands; to men who knew the influence of natural philoſophy upon the mind, and the force of habits; who had diſcernment enough to ſee the power, the impreſſions, of thoſe things which ſeem indifferent; attention enough, to direct the progreſs and opening of the mind; underſtanding and taſte enough, to diſtinguiſh uſeful knowledge from that which is fit only for the ſchool. Learning alone is not ſufficient for the diſcharge of ſo difficult and ſublime an office; whatever

whatever idea may be commonly annexed to it. The moſt enlightened philoſophers ought to undertake it. But I perceive, that I am making the reveries of a good citizen.

M. D'ALEMBERT has ſhewnt he defects of a college education, and it's remedies, ſo well, that nothing remains for me to add to what he has ſaid. I ſhall ſpeak only of our ſecond education, often worſe and more unprofitable than the firſt, but which it would be eaſier to alter.

IN countries where young people are let looſe in the world too ſoon, they bring with them a crude and ill-digeſted knowledge. Not being able to make any uſe of it, they think every part of it equally inſignificant, neglect the whole, and remain half-learned for life. In countries where the univerſities ſtill retain a certain credit, their youth either imbibe the ſame diſguſt there, or they become pedants.

A PHILOSOPHER might, in imitation of

the great men of antiquity, take a certain number of diſtinguiſhed youths, the hope of the State; form them for an active life, philoſophiſe with them in the midſt of the world, of a court, or in the gardens of Epicurus. Some years ago, a learned German projected a practical academy for buſineſs. I know not whether that eſtabliſhment ſubſiſts: but the thought was happy, and deſerves to be imitated in regard to all practical and really uſeful knowledge.

SUCH an education is certainly not the province of a man grown hoary in the duſt of the ſchool. No one ever attains to real ſkill even in philoſophy, but by experience, by a knowledge of the world and of men. If this occupation was more honoured, men of real abilities would not be wanting, who, weary of the buſtle and embarraſſment of buſineſs, would embrace with pleaſure a means of being ſtill uſeful to ſociety in the ſilence of a philoſophical retreat. Why do a people, whom we look upon

upon as little better than barbarians, go before us in ſo noble a deſign? The Perſian nobles, when diſgraced at court, preſerve the regard and eſteem of the public, by teaching philoſophy. Thoſe who devote themſelves to it early, enjoy a diſtinction which intitles them, by preference, to the alliance of their ſovereign.

EXPERIENCE proves the poſſibility of it among us. One of the greateſt commanders and ableſt negotiators of this age, (though not of this country,) has often told me that he owed his education to a general officer of a nation, from which we do not expect examples. Diſguſted with an oſtentatious learning, which he had got in the ſchools, and finding no utility in it, he neglected ſtudy, and entered into the ſervice. The general officer, perceiving the young man's talents, and the reaſon of his diſguſt, brought him back to the ſciences, inſtructed him in his tent, and in the midſt of the court, gave him a true taſte

for reading, and made him a man of knowledge. Ought ſuch an example to be ſo rare as to deſerve particular notice? Need a Cheſterfield or a Teſſin bluſh to employ their retirement in communicating their lights?

It would alſo be of ſervice to true philoſophy, if the public was more equitable in diſpenſing the reputation, and determining the intrinſic value of the ſciences. The utility reſulting from the eſtabliſhment of ſome academies, has been ſeen; and it was thought, in ſome foreign countries, that this utility would be increaſed by multiplying them. But it ſhould be conſidered, that a great number of men of only moderate genius, for ſuch we may fairly ſuppoſe the generality of academicians to be, cannot all employ themſelves on great objects: the deſire of ſhining, of ſhewing that they are worthy to be academicians, makes them fall on ſmall ones. They want to gain prizes; to crown their heads

heads with thoſe frivolous laurels. They plunge into phyſical trifles, and ſound philoſophy ſhares the contempt with which men of underſtanding honour theſe petty philoſophers.

THE number of naturaliſts, whoſe views take in a great field, who combine the ſeveral parts of knowledge for the benefit of mankind, is very ſmall. How few of the French academicians, for example,---for as to thoſe of Italy, where almoſt every town has an academy of it's own, I wiſh they were more worth noticing than they are;--- how few reſemble a Duhamel, a Buffon, a Juſti, a Linnæus! Yet theſe are the models which ſhould be imitated, if phyſical knowledge is to be cleared of the imputation of being frivolous, and if it is to merit the attention of a philoſopher. A man of ſuperior genius is great in great things: woe to him who is great only in ſmall ones.

THESE defects of our philoſophers,

which degrade philoſophy, are not always voluntary. The way of thinking of the great, and the ſpirit of the modern governments, baniſh learning too rigidly to colleges, and hinder men of genius from diſplaying their talents. True philoſophy is covered by the droſs of the ſciences, and the philoſopher confounded with the pedant cannot ſhew himſelf.

It is a trivial, but eternal truth; we cannot love any thing but what we know. How ſhould the Great, poorly inſtructed, eſteem what is moſt ſublime in human knowledge? The education of the maſters of the earth is directed by miniſters, executed by eccleſiaſtics. The intereſted ambition of the miniſters teaches them the falſe policy, of which they have ſo often been the dupes, of letting their maſters remain in ſhameful ignorance, that they may be the ſurer of governing them. That of the clergy renders them equally the protectors of ignorance: they prefer ſubmiſſive chriſtians, to men of underſtanding.

In turning over antient hiſtory, one is aſtoniſhed at the great number of learned ſovereigns. One is ſurpriſed at the extent of their knowledge in all the ſciences uſeful to, though diſtant from, their rank. Almoſt all the kings of Egypt, Syria, Sicily, and Aſia properly ſo called, were verſed in civil and natural hiſtory, in philoſophy, in polite literature: many were poets, hiſtorians, authors of eſteemed works. Among the Roman emperors we find a greater number ſcholars, than ignorant. Even the countries of the barbarians were governed by learned princes: what value did the antients not ſet upon the writings of Mithridates and Juba? Is it to be wondered at if princes, endowed with ſuch extraordinary talents, favoured philoſophy and the ſciences; and if their miniſters, their favourites, their friends (how people talked in thoſe rude ages!) were the greateſt philoſophers, the moſt intelligent men of their time? There is a ſtrong ſympathy between men of parts.

The modern princes, ſo often ill educated, are, in general, ſurrounded by a very indifferent ſet of men. We pride ourſelves upon a politeneſs ſuperior to that of the antients, and we ſtill ſcrupulouſly retain Gothic cuſtoms. Among the barbarians of the middle age, the poſſeſſors of the fiefs were every thing: the reſt of the nation was nothing. They therefore alone had the right of approaching the ſovereign, like the great nobility now-a-days. The *étiquette*, fruit of the trifling pride of the court of Conſtantinople, which ſoon ſpread throughout all Europe, finally ſettled the company that kings were to keep, as well as regulated their actions. A man muſt have a title before he may preſume to converſe with a prince: but Providence, ever juſt, does not always combine talents and merit with barbarous inſtitutions.

It ſhews a greatneſs of ſoul and reſolution, to ſhake off the ſlavery of ridiculous ceremonies. The Roman emperors, when they

they went to their villas, were accompanied by wits and philoſophers, inſtead of lords of the bed-chamber and maſters of the hounds.

ANOTHER remnant of barbariſm keeps philoſophers at a diſtance from the great light in which they ought to appear. The ſcience of government has been rendered a complicated art, ſunk into a ſubaltern detail, hid under mechanical formalities. The taſte, and the aſcendant of the civilians of the middle age affect every thing among us. Their profeſſion is made a trade of, and often ſubjected to a low apprenticeſhip. Miniſters, like indifferent phyſicians, talk of nothing but long experience; as if the having gone on blindly in a beaten track could ſupply the want of genius. In conſequence of this prejudice, another ariſes againſt a man who has not ſpent his life in groping in the obſcurity of detail: William the Third's ſaying of Newton is quoted emphatically. It is not obſerved,

that

that all the greateſt politicians have ruſhed at once into their buſineſs. People will not comprehend, that a man, who has given proofs of a ſuperior penetration in the moſt ſublime truths, can employ the ſame penetration in the ſcience of government, the certain principles of which require only an happy application.

PHILOSOPHY is the art of finding the principles and connections of all our knowledge: the art of combining effects in order to diſcover their cauſes, and of combining cauſes in order to produce or to foreſee the poſſible effects. She therefore is concerned in all the ſciences: all knowledge is within her diſtrict.

BUT ſhe chooſes preferably the moſt uſeful parts, the moſt worthy, to employ herſelf on. Virtue being preferable to learning, ſhe gives the firſt place to morality. The happineſs of individuals depending on that of ſociety, ſhe gives the next to the ſcience of government. She ranges each

each branch of knowledge according to it's degree of utility. In enlightening our mind, ſhe endeavours to elevate our ſoul; in endeavouring to form the heart, ſhe founds her maxims upon enlightened principles.

If we bring philoſophy back to her true deſtination, ſhe will reſume her antient dignity. The name of philoſopher will no longer be a term of contempt: it will be the characteriſtic mark of the object of the admiration and love of a nation. For how can eſteem be refuſed to a man as great by the extent of his enlightened mind, by the penetration of his genius, as by the ſublimity of his virtues; who ſtudies all that the ſciences contain of uſe to mankind.

If we ſtudy philoſophy in this ſpirit, we ſhall ſee the ſerene day come on, of which I think I perceive the dawn. Philoſophical knowledge will extend in depth, and not in ſurface only, as hitherto. Method and light will be introduced every where.

We

We have ſome ſpecimens of it. The immortal work of the ſpirit of laws proves the amazing progreſs which legiſlation may make with the help of philoſophy. We have philoſophical works upon œconomics, upon civil government, upon commerce, upon the finances. Hiſtory itſelf, heretofore the heavy and barren work of the memory, begins to partake of the philoſophic ſpirit: it may become a true collection of moral and political experiments. Combined by a philoſopher, they will become the moſt intereſting and moſt inſtructive ſcience.

The ſcience of government will receive ſtill greater advantages from the application of philoſophy. I know the great propenſity of modern miniſters and politicians, to call ſpeculation, or chimæra, every thing that exceeds the narrow bounds of their genius, or that aſtoniſhes their little ſouls: but a ſlight attention to hiſtory, and to the progreſs of human reaſon, will ſhew us the

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ſurpriſing alterations which the courſe of ſome ages has produced in political ideas. How many new ſyſtems eſtabliſhed, errors rectified, prejudices rooted out!

MANY things yet remain to be diſcovered, to be done, to be altered. A political Deſcartes may make us doubt of the goodneſs of the blind beaten track of affairs, though conſecrated by the example of our anceſtors. The people are accuſed of being prejudiced againſt novelties, becauſe they are novelties. This taſte of the people reaches very far; even to thoſe who fill the firſt places. Let us not believe that our predeceſſors, ignorant, rude, and juſt emerged from barbariſm, have fathomed every thing: with the help of their lights, we ſhall ſee ſtill better.

THE prejudices and trifles which the civilians, formerly our only ſtateſmen, introduced into the politics, are wearing out by degrees. We have ſeen obſcure men raiſe their voice from amidſt the throng,

to

to point out abuſes, to combat prejudices: wiſe miniſters have profited by theſe repreſentations: ſeveral branches of buſineſs have been perfected.

The people will be happy when philoſophers ſhall be miniſters, or miniſters philoſophers: it is then that we ſhall enjoy all the advantages which art and nature promiſe us: tranquility at home, fruit of the perſuaſion of the people that they are wiſely governed, and of the knowledge which ſovereigns have of their true intereſts, the happineſs of their people; and repoſe abroad, fruit of the true power of the ſtate, and of the confidence with which it inſpires it's neighbours.

This epoch is perhaps nearer than we think. The progreſs of reaſon and of the lights of philoſophy, aſſure us that it is. Why ſhould we not be filled with the moſt flattering hopes? when we ſee one of the firſt thrones filled by a philoſopher; by a prince, who, by a profound

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ſtudy of philoſophy and letters has rendered himſelf the greateſt politician and the greateſt general of his age; by a prince, whoſe ſublime qualities do not exclude the moſt agreeable ones; by a prince, who joins the genius and courage of Cæſar to the talents of Julian, and the virtues of Marcus Antoninus.

ESSAY II.

OF

PROJECTS.

Dum terras hominumque colunt genus, aſpera bella
Componunt, agros aſſignant, oppida condunt,
Ploravere ſuis non reſpondere favorem
Speratum meritis.——
HORAT. EPIST. Lib. II.

OF

PROJECTS.

THE auguſt author of the Anti-Machiavel adviſes every man, to lay down to himſelf a plan of life, as well connected as a mathematical demonſtration. Such a plan, which points out the means, which combines the circumſtances, ſaves us from fluctuating ſteps, from contradictions in conduct, and prevents us from abandoning ourſelves to a blind chance.

THIS advice amounts to that of making projects; ſince a project is nothing elſe, than a plan drawn up to increaſe our own happineſs or that of others: a plan, which ſhews the way to arrive at that happineſs, and to remove the obſtacles that ſtop us.

SOME will, perhaps, be ſurpriſed to find

an enlightened ſage adviſe projects. The world is ſo prejudiced againſt every thing which bears that name, or any reſemblance to it, that the character of projector is, according to the vulgar opinion, one of the moſt equivocal: it approaches nearly to that of adept and quack. It will be eaſy, however, to get the better of thoſe prejudices, by taking the pains to examine the nature of projects. That examination will prove, beyond diſpute, their nobleneſs, their uſefulneſs, and their neceſſity.

THE progreſs of the human mind is ſlow and gradual, and depends on the concourſe of many circumſtances, which are not to be combined but by long intervals. The arts, the ſciences, approach continually towards perfection, without perhaps ever attaining it. It would be undervaluing both ourſelves, and our poſterity, to think it impoſſible to add to the lights tranſmitted by our anceſtors.

PROOFS are needleſs to evince a truth acknowledged

acknowledged in regard to the ſciences in general. It ſeems, however, that an exception is made in favour of that of government. It is imagined that a ſcience, for which there has been occaſion ever ſince there have been ſocieties, and which has been applied to in all ſtates, for ſo long a time, and by ſo many great men, ought to be thoroughly known, it's maxims verified, and their uſes fixed.

REFLECTION and experience prove the contrary. It is natural that a ſcience extremely complicated, and of which the object changes inceſſantly, ſhould advance only by meaſured ſteps. It requires changes proportioned to thoſe of it's object. An abſolute goodneſs cannot be given to political eſtabliſhments: one is often obliged to ſay, ſuch a thing was good in ſuch an age, in ſuch a year. Notwithſtanding ſome indelible features of the character of a people, it muſt be owned, that that character is ſubject to variations. New reli-

gions which are introduced; new arts, new ſciences which are invented; new branches of commerce which are eſtabliſhed; new methods of making war; new political intereſts to be combined; all this makes a great diverſity in a ſcience, of which only the firſt principles are plain and ſimple.

We ſee, however, that ſtateſmen neglect theſe conſiderations, and follow implicitly a vague and uncertain track. Thrown into the direction of affairs by chance, by birth, by favour, they often poſſeſs for the management of them, inſtead of ſuperior abilities, only a great ambition, and a violent deſire to make a brilliant fortune. They content themſelves with following the beaten road of their predeceſſors, which favours their indolence and incapacity.

Nothing leads more ſurely to mediocrity, than this attachment to old ways. To let the world go on as it goes, is leaving that world in error, languor, and abjection. Bacon ſaw, that to arrive at great things,

things, it was neceſſary to take diſtant roads, which, by their novelty, ſeem wild and ridiculous to ſuperficial minds.

To combat the attachment to old prejudices, an attachment which is always a ſentiment of barbariſm, is not recommending the love of novelty. It is as ridiculous to be fond of a new thing, merely becauſe it is new, as to reſpect an old one ſolely on account of it's antiquity. One may diſapprove of a ſervile ſubmiſſion to the eſtabliſhed ways, without approving the foible of many miniſters, who innovate for the ſake of innovating, to make themſelves a name, and to ſeem not to depend upon the lights of their predeceſſors. To render a ſtate happy, there muſt be nobler views than the love of vain glory acquired by equivocal means.

It is only neceſſary to make people ſenſible that all is not yet diſcovered; that our knowledge ſtands in need of continual correction; that the progreſs of reaſon may extend

extend equally in all the ſciences; and that it would conſequently be wrong to adopt the old methods without examining them, and to be prejudiced againſt new ones which men of genius may offer.

In fact, we owe all the changes that have happened in the arts, in the ſciences, in religions, in the government of ſtates, to thoſe ſuperior men, who, leaving the beaten roads, have taught us new ones, and have uſed all the neceſſary means to induce us to follow them: in ſhort, we owe them to projectors. I will not ſay, that all thoſe who formed theſe projects, foreſaw their conſequences: but it was, nevertheleſs their courage which prepared them for us; and if their view was limited, as that of all men is, we do not for that reaſon owe them the leſs grateful acknowledgment. Neither will I maintain, that theſe projects are equally advantageous to mankind: no one is exempted from the empire of the paſſions. Who too can tell,

whether

whether theſe continual changes, and even theſe total ſubverſions of things, are not as natural and as neceſſary to the moral ſyſtem of the univerſe, as ſtorms and tempeſts are to the phyſical conſtitution of our globe?

To ground reflections upon facts; let us examine ſome of the moſt famous projects, of thoſe which have contributed moſt to vary the face of the ſciences, of religion, and of ſtates.

We cannot conſider philoſophers, men of ſyſtematic minds, in any other light, than as ſo many projectors who aim at perfecting our knowledge. From the earlieſt ſages down to the lateſt ſcholaſtics, an infinity of men have tried to conduct their fellow creatures into the ſanctuary of truth; but the greater number have only led ſome farther from it.

Two projects, formed in the laſt century, merit our attention: that of Bacon, and that of Deſcartes. The firſt ſhewed us the true way to come at facts, the foundation

foundation of our knowledge: the ſecond, the way to combine thoſe facts, and to draw juſt inferences from them. Bacon, wiſe in all his views, teaches us the art of interrogating nature: Deſcartes, whoſe imagination was too vaſt, in ſeeming to aim at ſubjecting nature to his ideas, teaches us to reaſon. Both of them were, notwithſtanding their defects, the benefactors of mankind; ſince we owe to them ſound philoſophy. We enjoy the benefactions of thoſe great men, without yet knowing their full extent. We do not conſider, how much that precious liberty of thinking, of which their works have ſet us the example, has helped us to correct errors, rectify abuſes, and root out prejudices, though conſecrated by their long ſtanding. It ſpreads it's influence over all our knowledge, all our actions, all our inſtitutions: without it, we ſhould ſtill be under the yoke of Ariſtotle, and in the darkneſs of the ſchools: we ſhould groan beneath

beneath the ſhackles of ſuperſtition and deſpotiſm.

A GOOD or a bad religion determines the happineſs or miſery of a people. Among the falſe ones, the beſt is undoubtedly that which deviates the leaſt from truth, and turns the manners of it's followers towards the greateſt felicity of a ſtate. We ought to be obliged to thoſe, who, inſtead of the religions which were too bare-facedly contradictory to good ſenſe, have introduced others more reaſonable, though mixed with errors, for want of an immediate revelation. Antient Perſia owed her grandeur and riches to Zoroaſter, whoſe wiſe precepts were calculated to inſpire his followers with humanity, virtue, and induſtry. His book of the Zend is one of the fineſt projects, and the moſt reſpectable monument of antiquity.

IF ſouls ſeparated from the body ſtill pay any regard to their glory here, what delightful ſentiments muſt fill that of Confucius?

fucius? That great man will have the ſatisfaction of ſeeing the religion which he taught, the pureſt that human reaſon, left to itſelf, can imagine, ſubſiſt after ſo many ages; of ſeeing it conſtitute the inceſſant happineſs of a numerous and enlightened nation.

MAHOMET's project, though disfigured by an unbounded and ſometimes cruel ambition, is equally worthy of our attention. He will have the merit at leaſt of having reſcued part of the Eaſt from a groſs idolatry; of having ſpread the knowledge of one only God, and of having introduced a religion ſimple in itſelf, little embarraſſed with abſtruſe dogmas, and which, freed from ſome abſurd fables, would be one of the moſt reaſonable among the falſe. All theſe ſuperior men have been inſtruments in the hand of Providence to change the face of ſtates, and apoſtles, deſtined to teach men a ſmall portion of the eternal truths.

If thoſe truths are taught to ignorant and ſavage men; if a religion ſerves to draw them from barbariſm; the merit of him who forms that plan is by ſo much the more exalted. One is ſurpriſed at the power and extent of the kingdom of Peru, when one conſiders the ſmall diſtance of time, between it's deſtruction by the Spaniards, and the epoch of it's foundation by Mango-Capac; who, under pretence of his miſſion from the ſun, drew the people of that country from foreſts, gave them laws, and formed them into a civiliſed ſociety.

It is not probable, that the authors of the ſchiſm which divides the Chriſtian church, comprehended the extent and conſequences of their project. The deſire of delivering us from the too heavy yoke of the clergy, and the neceſſity of remedying many abuſes, ſeem to have determined their plan. They did not foreſee that their courage prepared for us an age of light, brought us back to the culture of reaſon, and made them

them the fore-runners of our philoſophers. The advantageous conſequences of this project are not confined to the followers of their doctrine; they extend to that part of the church which has withdrawn itſelf from the direction of the biſhop of Rome, and which has ſince purified itſelf in ſeveral reſpects. That church enjoys benefits ariſing from the men ſhe moſt deteſts.

We have ſeen in our days the ſingular phenomenon of a man who, by the means of fanaticiſm, would lead us to the ſimplicity of the primitive church. Let us however own, that Count Zinzendorff's project is well combined, and that all it's parts lend each other a mutual aſſiſtance. His inſtitutions tend to weaken the ſoul; to exalt the imagination; to damp the moſt active paſſions, love, intereſt, ambition, by depriving them of their aliment; in ſhort, to make thorough enthuſiaſts. He failed only in time: he came too late, and our age is not favourable to chiefs of ſects.

There

There will doubtleſs be fanatics, ſo long as there ſhall be weak ſouls and ſtrong imaginations. But reaſon, which extends itſelf, and which reaches even to the maſs of the people, fortifies thoſe ſouls, moderates thoſe imaginations, and deſtroys the empire of fanaticiſm and ſuperſtition. Since the death of Zinzendorff his flock has dwindled, and his chimerical illuſions meet the fate of thoſe ſhort-lived ſects, which periſh as ſoon as the contagious imagination of the chief ceaſes to act upon that of the diſciples.

If religions have been ſubject to innovations made by projectors; government has been infinitely more ſo. Politics, the ſtage and aliment of the great paſſions, are by their nature more ſuſceptible of new views than theology. If we look into hiſtory, we find in every country revolutions upon revolutions, fruit of the enterprizing genius of the conquerors or of the people. The number of theſe projects is ſo great,

that we muſt content ourſelves with examining ſome of the moſt extenſive, or moſt extraordinary.

AMONG thoſe of the antient legiſlators, none is more ſurpriſing, nor more diſtant from the common ideas of men, than that of Lycurgus. His inſtitutions ſhock morality and all the paſſions, to bring them to one point, ambition: but yet they are ſo well combined, that their effect was infallible. The long duration of thoſe inſtitutions proves their wiſdom and goodneſs. The Lacedemonians were a troop of religious, who, not being able to have any other object of their paſſions, attached themſelves the more ſtrongly to an auſtere rule. If the authors of the popiſh monaſtic orders had not been fanatics, one might ſuſpect them of having formed their inſtitutions upon that excellent model.

CÆSAR's project, to make himſelf chief of his own country, was good, wiſe, and neceſſary, though blamed by over-zealous republicans.

republicans. The unbounded greatneſs of the republic, the extreme ambition of it's citizens, the corruption of the ſenate and people, the horrors of the paſt civil wars, all might convince a thinking man, that Rome could do no longer without a maſter. Cæſar, from his youth, took meaſures to become that maſter. His art to gain the people, to make himſelf a party; his conduct in Catiline's conſpiracy, in Gaul, and with Pompey, ſhew an admirably well concerted and equally well executed plan. That of Pompey could not ſucceed. It was above the genius of it's author: or rather his variations, his fluctuating behaviour, prove, that he had only an object and no plan.

If any project comes near to Cæſar's, it is that of Cromwell. A tradition among the Engliſh, who ſo ſeldom do juſtice to the great men of their own nation, pretends, it is true, that Cromwell did nothing more than execute Ireton's ideas: but it is

impoſſible to believe this anecdote, when one conſiders how well combined, and how well followed, Cromwell's conduct was. Whilſt his cruelty and uſurpation are deteſted, one cannot help admiring his dexterity, in making uſe of the very love of liberty to inthral a free people.

One of the vaſteſt projects ever formed was that of the Popes, to attain univerſal monarchy. The ignorance and ruſticity of the middle ages were doubtleſs neceſſary for the ſucceſs of ſuch a deſign: but thoſe circumſtances do not leſſen the ſublimity of the views of thoſe who formed it. How difficult muſt it have been for a power deſtitute of troops, armed only with ſpiritual thunders, to ſubject the throne to the altar! what art, to render the clergy ſacred and reſpectable! Hiſtory does not furniſh us with any other inſtance of ſuch a project, except that of the great Lama, whoſe power will laſt as long as the ruſticity of the Tartars. That of the Popes maintained

maintained itſelf for ages, and would ſtill be in it's vigour, had it not been for one of thoſe viciſſitudes, to which all human inſtitutions are liable. Such a project cannot ſuit an hereditary monarchy, where the weakneſs and paſſions of the ſucceſſive ſovereigns, and the uncertainties of minorities, render affairs unſettled and precarious. It cannot proſper in any but an elective government, the head of which is choſen from amongſt a body animated with the ſame ſpirit, and where the man may die, but the ſovereign does not.

CHARLES V. was ſuſpected, and his ſon Philip II. was accuſed, of aiming at an univerſal monarchy of another kind: a monarchy, which would have had for it's vaſſals the reſt of the ſovereigns of Europe. Both of them laviſhed the treaſures of America in vain, as could not but be the caſe. To eſtabliſh the dominion of a chriſtian power over all others, the religion, the manners, the arts of Europe

muſt be changed, and we muſt be replunged into barbariſm.

NOTWITHSTANDING the teſtimony of many hiſtorians, I cannot believe the reality of the grand project aſcribed to Henry IV. of France. I ſhall not enter into a diſcuſſion of the authenticity of Sully's Memoirs: the detail at leaſt of that project cannot have been drawn up by that great miniſter. It is impoſſible that two ſuch good heads, as thoſe of Henry IV. and Sully, could engender a chimæra, which is the philoſopher's ſtone in politics. A ſlender knowledge of men, and of the courſe of affairs, demonſtrates the inconſiſtency of a project, which turns upon the frail foundation of the unanimity of a great number of powers. The ſpirit of conqueſt in one ſovereign would have made him ſtir: the others, hoping to find their account in trouble and confuſion, would have refuſed to ſubmit to the arbitration of the greater number, and the building would have fallen by it's own

own weight. A perpetual peace is not in the decrees of Providence; which, if ſuch a thing had been intended, would have given men a different character. War ſeems to me a neceſſary evil: if we were deſigned for abſolute uniformity, we ſhould never have been afflicted with plagues and earthquakes.

ONE cannot entertain a better opinion of Gœrtz's project. It's goodneſs, at leaſt, was only momentary, to raiſe Sweden. Two ſuch neighbours as Charles XII. and Peter the Great, could not have agreed long; and Europe, for which they were forging chains, would have recovered her liberty by their diviſion.

A NORTHERN prince formed a plan, of which hiſtory does not furniſh any example; of a power entirely military, founded on a mercenary army, too ſtrong in proportion to the number of his people, and the reſources of his dominions. The ſucceſſor of that prince, as much ſuperior to

his father by the ſtrength of his genius as by the extent of his knowledge, avails himſelf with the utmoſt judgment of the advantages of the project, of which the father never gueſſed the conſequences, and gives himſelf a weight in affairs, which the laſt century would not have ſuſpected. But a power always armed, always ready to fall upon it's neighbours, excites the jealouſy of all Europe. It has the inconvenience of thoſe too complicated and too nice machines, which are diſordered by the leaſt accident. The principal piece gives way, the main-ſpring is over-ſtrained, and the machine remains motionleſs.

All theſe projects have been formed in order to produce conſiderable revolutions, and rather for the grandeur of the ſovereigns, than for the happineſs of the people. Such is the misfortune of mankind, that ſubjects, far from being bettered by the power of their ſovereign, become real ſufferers, and are by ſo much the more wretched,

wretched, as their prince acquires more military glory. It were to be wiſhed, that ſuch geniuſes ſhould appear but ſeldom; and in this ſenſe one may ſay with Plutarch, that a plurality of Cæſars is not good.

THERE are projects of another nature, more common, more uſeful, and which endeavour to combine the eaſe of the people with the grandeur of the monarch. Such are thoſe relating to the finances, the police, commerce, the arts. Their number ſurpaſſes infinitely that of political projects for the general affairs. It would be tireſome and needleſs to examine many of them.

THERE needs ſometimes but one of theſe great projects of commerce, to change the face of the earth, more than the greateſt conqueſts would do. We ſtill feel the effects of the projects of Prince Henry of Portugal and Chriſtopher Columbus. The navigation round the Cape of Good Hope

weakened

weakened Italy and the Turkiſh provinces, and prepared the way for the power of Portugal, Holland, and England. The diſcovery of America, in giving us new riches, gave us new wants. It conſequently animated induſtry, and facilitated the ſubſiſtance of the numerous people of Europe, by procuring vents for the produce of our manufactures. Even in our cottages, we perceive the influence of Columbus's ſchemes. They diſturbed, indeed, the repoſe of our continent. The Houſe of Auſtria could not have formed her ambitious deſigns, without that aſſiſtance: but without America, the fecundity of the northern nations would have brought us back perhaps to an age of deſtructive migrations.

If the project of Drake, of Raleigh, of Cromwell, for taking from the Spaniards the commerce of thoſe rich countries, had ſucceeded; our political ſyſtem would have been quite altered. The ſource of what men have agreed to look upon as riches being

being in the hands of a high-ſpirited people, a people in ſome meaſure diſconnected from other ſtates, would have made the balance of power incline too much in favour of a nation which has already carried it full far.

But the project the moſt dangerous for Europe was that of Marſhal Vauban, who, deſpairing of the affairs of Philip V. in Spain, wanted to ſend him to reign in America. The arts and manufactures, tranſplanted into that new world; would have freed thoſe diſtant countries from dependance on us. Thoſe people, whom we look upon as barbarians, would perhaps have ſubjected us by their induſtry. We might have ſeen in our ports more Mexican ſhips, than we ever ſent to the Spaniſh colonies. That event alone might have replunged us into miſery and barbariſm.

If the plan of Peter the Great had been practicable, it would not have been leſs dangerous to the liberty of the old world.

To

To join the Caſpian to the Black-ſea, and both of them to the northern ocean; to make the trade of China and the Eaſt-Indies paſs through Great Tartary, ſubject or tributary to Ruſſia; would have been raiſing the Ruſſian empire to a degree of power above that of the other empires of Aſia and Europe. It is eaſy to ſee the conſequences of unbounded power in the hands of an abſolute monarch, who governs a warlike people. The love of independance in the Tartars, in that noble and victorious nation, ſaved us from the danger we were threatened with.

It is extraordinary, to ſee people ſtill queſtion the goodneſs of Peter's principal project, that of civilizing his nation: to ſee them maintain, that a more elevated genius would have let the Ruſſians remain ignorant and uncivilized. The love of paradoxes, that taſte for ſingularity, can alone ſuggeſt ſentiments ſo unreaſonable, contradicted by experience. It is in fact

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the ſame queſtion as that which has been ſtarted concerning the uſefulneſs and danger of the arts and ſciences. A man muſt be a barbarian indeed, to dare to eſpouſe the cauſe of barbariſm in the midſt of an enlightened people. To refute ſeriouſly ſuch fanatical miſanthropes, is doing them too much honour.

THE utility of Colbert's projects, for eſtabliſhing the arts and commerce in France, was not limited to the ſtate for which they were made. All Europe reaped their fruits; and that great man may be truly ſaid to have contributed more than any other to bring about the enlightened times in which we live. He rouzed the induſtry of all nations: an induſtry, which gave us that eaſe and luxury, without which there never will be either knowledge or politeneſs. The revocation of the edict of Nantes completed the diſperſing in the north that ſeed which Colbert had intended only for the ſoil of France.

ONE

ONE of the boldeſt, moſt ſingular, and moſt equivocal of projects, was that of Law. It is ſtill diſputed in France, whether that ſyſtem, if continued, would have done moſt good or moſt hurt. The miſchief is certain: the ſyſtem led directly to deſpotiſm. Combined upon a thorough knowledge of men, it was a ſubtle way of taking advantage of the greedineſs of the ſubjects, to make their poſſeſſions paſs into the hands of the monarch, who, maſter of the ſinews of the ſtate, would have enjoyed an unbounded power. The good which reſulted from the ſyſtem is equivocal: it excited the induſtry of the nation, it is true, and conſequently occaſioned a greater extenſion of trade: but is it not degrading the ſoul, and debaſing the ſentiments of a generous people, to inſpire them with that inordinate deſire of riches? The ſpirit of trade is advantageous to a ſtate, and eſtimable if it keeps within due bounds. But when it reaches to every claſs, and renders men

ſenſible only to a ſordid intereſt; glory, honour, politeneſs, the moral virtues, all is loſt.

THERE are ſometimes projects, which, without being brilliant, have influences happy for a ſtate: like thoſe hidden ſprings, which, running underneath a parched ſoil, render it fruitful, though our eyes do not perceive the latent cauſe. The Engliſh know now, that agriculture is the only ſolid baſis of population and commerce, and conſequently of their power. England owes her progreſs in good huſbandry to the inſtructions and example of Milton's friend, Hartlib. A ſingle citizen cemented the grandeur of his country.

PRIVATE perſons often venture to raiſe their voice from amidſt the multitude, to remonſtrate againſt abuſes. Though the government too ſeldom heeds them, truth ſometimes pierces to the throne. Some projects of Marſhal Vauban and of the Abbé de St. Pierre, would have made

France

France happy, if people had not been too ſoon diſguſted with the trials which were made to execute them. Some citizens demonſtrated to the miniſtry of that country the diſadvantages of the laws which reſtricted the Levant trade, which cramped that of corn, and which prohibited the printing of linnens. Remedies were thereupon applied to remove thoſe inconveniencies, and that kingdom has already felt to ſo great a degree the advantage of not having been deaf to the cries of the people, that ſhe ſeems to have effectually monopolized the far greateſt ſhare of the woollen trade to Turkey, by being able to underſell the Engliſh at that market; and in the year 1765, which was the very firſt year after the exportation of corn from France was permitted, at which very time too it was forbid to be ſent out of England, the French actually exported corn, of their growth, to the amount of thirty millions of livres. What farther progreſs may they

not

not be expected to make in the moſt eſſentially beneficial art of agriculture; patronized as that ſcience now is by their king and all the moſt illuſtrious of the kingdom! The permiſſion to print linnen will free France from her dependance on Swiſſerland for that article: but it may be attended with moſt melancholy conſequences to this laſt country, the ſterility of which renders induſtry ſo neceſſary to it's numerous inhabitants.

If, as we have ſeen, projects are attended with ſuch conſiderable advantages; if it be by their means that all the revolutions of ſtates are produced; one may juſtly wonder that there ſhould be ſo general a prejudice againſt thoſe who make them, without being charged with the functions of government. Several cauſes concur to throw a ridicule and an odium on their occupation.

Creative geniuſes, and conſequently projectors, are men of a warm imagination.

The moſt dangerous gift that nature can beſtow upon a man, is a ſtrong imagination, not accompanied with equal ſtrength of judgment. It is like an excellent, but mettleſome horſe, which requires being guided by a ſkilful hand. An imagination of this kind, ſtrongly impreſſed with an object, careſſes it with complacency, thinks himſelf always near the reality, and diſregards all obſtacles which oppoſe his favourite phantom. It flies continually out of the ſphere of the actual ſtate of things; roams only in the regions of abſtruſe poſſibilities; engenders no ideas but what are equally vaſt, new, and chimerical. It is incredible, how many abſurdities paſs through theſe over-heated imaginations. A phyſician, ignorant even of the elements of geometry, thought he had rectified the ſyſtem of the world. Another propoſed, forcing the aërian ſpirits to perfect chemiſtry. A German muſician was for teaching princes harmonic proportions, as a means

means of eſtabliſhing perpetual peace. Another enthuſiaſt pretended to give the commerce of the world to a nation which had neither ſhips nor harbours. In ſhort, Caritides's project is rational, in compariſon to an infinity of others, more extravagant, which we ſee hatched every day.

The character and condition of moſt projectors, is another circumſtance which adds to the prejudice againſt projects. The makers of them are commonly men who, not having been able to regulate their own affairs and their own conduct, ſet up for reformers of the ſtate: idle ſpeculators, without knowledge of men or buſineſs: vagabonds, who, void of all ſentiment except a prodigious eagerneſs to make a ſudden fortune, and of all talents except an impudent boldneſs, run from court to court, to offer to ſovereigns their fine conceptions: like thoſe itinerant diſciples of Eſculapius, who, with a packet of powders in their hand, make the tour of the world,

to cure all nations. The princes deceived, their miniſters teized, the people ſo often oppreſſed by men of this kind, take an averſion to all that bears the name of project, or projector.

WHAT completes the ridicule and odium attached to the occupation of projector, is the nature of moſt of the projects that are propoſed to ſovereigns. Almoſt all of them are calculated to increaſe the revenues and power of the prince: ſcarce any regard the real happineſs of the ſtate. The prejudice of the people againſt whatever appears with an aſpect of novelty, is excuſable. It may be preſumed before hand, that every new project will add to the weight of the yoke which already oppreſſes the ſubject. Nothing is eaſier, and ſometimes nothing is more lucrative, than to teach the art of ſtripping the people. Princes and miniſters of a narrow genius, who are not ſenſible how much the miſery of the people weakens a government, liſten to theſe dangerous teachers,

teachers, and the people deteſt them. Plans founded on the principle, of it's being right to ſow before one reaps, and which require time, and extenſive combinations, are too complicated and too ſlow for ardent imaginations: too fine for abject ſouls, animated ſolely by private intereſt.

THE beſt things are abuſed. It is no wonder then if the taſte for projects undergoes the ſame fate. But as abuſes ought not to depreciate in our eyes that which is eſtimable by it's nature; they will not prejudice us againſt projects, if we conſider the neceſſity of making good ones, and the great talents which ſuch require. We have ſeen that projects were indiſpenſable towards the happineſs of nations: let us inquire into the ſublime qualities, neceſſary in thoſe who make them.

A PROJECT, by it's nature, is compoſed of new ideas, or at leaſt of a new combination of known ideas. It ſeldom depends on a ſingle application of ideas already

exiſting. The mind might, perhaps, ſuffice for that application: but to arrive at great things, it is neceſſary to create. An uſeful project is conſequently always the fruit of genius.

It is very difficult to determine wherein aptitude to genius conſiſts. The contradictions and doubts of philoſophers concerning this point, ſhew the obſcurity in which this ſubject is ſtill enveloped. One would however incline to think, that genius depends on an happy organiſation, improved by a good education, animated by the degree of paſſions ſufficient to excite the efforts neceſſary for invention. Among the qualities of the mind of man, there are ſome which are commonly thought to exclude others. One ſeldom ſees a fertile imagination joined to an exquiſite judgment, fit to appreciate the productions of the former, and to diſtinguiſh what is real from that which is chimerical. The men deſtined to genius are conſequently few.

If

If Nature forms them, ſhe ſeldom places thoſe favourites in a ſituation in which they can cultivate and diſplay the talents ſhe has given them.

By conſidering the reaſons of the ſcarcity of genius in all the arts and ſciences, one will be convinced, that it muſt be ſtill more rare in the politics. Genius, in every ſcience, ſets out from the point where it finds clear ideas and known principles exiſting. Let us not flatter ourſelves: notwithſtanding the experience of ſo many ages, notwithſtanding the immenſe number of pretended legiſlators and ſtateſmen, the politics are, of all the ſciences, that which has been brought the leaſt towards perfection. This backwardneſs is owing to ſeveral concomitant cauſes.

The ſolid principles of our knowledge depend on facts, and on juſt inferences drawn from them. What collection, may I be aſked, of political facts does not hiſtory afford us? If hiſtory was what it

ſhould be, we might draw from that heap of moral and political experiments ideas fit to nouriſh genius. But good hiſtory yet remains to be written, and probably will ever continue ſo. Hiſtorians either do not, or cannot teach us any thing in regard to the moſt inſtructive facts. Thoſe of them who have been actors in the events which they relate, conceal the truth through a prudent timidity, diſguiſe it through paſſion, or disfigure it through incapacity. The others, who, in the obſcurity of a cloſet, maim un-ſhaped materials, are like thoſe hireling engravers, who boldly give us the portraits of the favourite ſultanas. We are ignorant of the little ſprings of great actions, the cauſes of revolutions, the influence of manners upon government, and that of the ſpirit of the government over the power and happineſs of a ſtate. We only gueſs ſuperficially at thoſe principles; and are nearly in the caſe of a man who, upon ſeeing the outſide of a palace,

ſhould

ſhould pretend to judge of the condition of it's apartments.

Even ſuppoſing that a man, by dint of ſearching, ſhould find a grain of gold in this heap of ſand, he will not dare to try it in the crucible of public approbation or contradiction. In almoſt all countries, the ſcience of government is a holy of holies, into which the prophane are forbid to enter: a kind of miniſtry, in the hands of a few adepts: a miniſtry which one dares not either gueſs at or examine. Too many are intereſted in keeping the people ignorant of the true principles of the politics. They who would rule the conſciences of men by fanaticiſm, artfully blend with the legiſlation principles favourable to ſpiritual deſpotiſm, and conſecrate errors by an arbitrary explication of dogmas. Thoſe who are in place, alarmed by that inward and irreſiſtible feeling which every man of middling parts has of his own mediocrity, do not allow of diving into thoſe profound

maxims, which would be an inconteſtable proof of the ſhallow views of falſe politicians, and a continual criticiſm on their poor conduct. The one and the other turn aſide the piercing eye of genius, and forbid any daring hand to pull off the veil that covers truth: a deed which would demoliſh their weight and importance.

With the greateſt aptneſs to genius, a man will not ſucceed in the politics, if his paſſions are not alſo of a nobler kind, and ſtronger, than thoſe which are required for genius in general. Without the warmeſt deſire of glory, without an ardent ſpirit of patriotiſm, without that ſublime virtue which prefers the public good to private intereſt; he will not have courage to bear the contradictions, the perſecutions, and the fear of ridicule, to which men are expoſed in that career. He will dread being called an innovator, a reformer of the ſtate, a chimerical viſionary. Our education however is not calculated to inſpire us with

thoſe

thoſe ſtrong paſſions, which we fruitleſsly admire in the antients: it fills our ſoul with only little paſſions, with the deſire of making a fortune, with vulgar ambition, or at moſt with a point of honour, which ſcarcely ſuffices to incline us to virtue, even ſo far only as is neceſſary in order not to appear quite deſpicable in the eyes of our fellow citizens.

GENIUS muſt conſequently be rare in the ſcience of government; and if it ſurmounts all the obſtacles which oppoſe it's formation, it will have ſtill greater to overcome before it can diſplay it's talents. The public, whom the man of genius will wiſh to inſtruct, will moſt commonly refuſe to confide in him. We have a blind reſpect for dignities, a ſervile admiration for grandeur, which makes us look upon men in place as ſublime geniuſes, and their adminiſtration as the maſter-piece of the human mind. If a ſage propoſes truths contrary to the method of thoſe admired men; he will

will be looked upon as preſumptuous, as one who pretends to teach thoſe who know more than himſelf, or as a fanatic fit for Plato's republic. It would therefore be equally neceſſary, that he who governs and inſtructs the people ſhould ſtrike them with awe by the ſplendor of places and dignities. But thoſe places, thoſe dignities, inſtead of being the reward of genius, are too generally the price of intrigues, the purchaſe of meanneſs, or at beſt the appendage of birth. For a man of genius to make his fortune, is unhappily a phenomenon among us. Genius is requiſite to reliſh genius; and the Great ſuffer about them only ſuch as reſemble them.

The greater theſe difficulties are, the more one ought to be thankful to the virtuous and enlightened citizen who endeavours to ſurmount them. An able projector will always be a valuable man, in the eyes of thoſe who know how to diſtinguiſh merit. The generality of mankind,

ſo

ſo ready to admire what they do not underſtand, would do well to apply that readineſs to projects; and to believe, that only a genius like that which produces, can appreciate it's productions. People ſhould act in regard to a ſcience ſo difficult and complicated as the politics, as they do with reſpect to geometricians. Every one is enraptured with the ſublime diſcoveries of Newton; though very few comprehend them. They truſt to the unanimous judgment of thoſe who are able to fathom them.

It ſeems ſuperfluous to attempt to guide genius, and preſcribe rules for it's progreſs. That, ſome might ſay, would be imitating the ſavage chief, who marks out to the ſun the courſe it is to take. Some conſiderations on the manner of forming projects may however be of uſe, if not to direct the inventor, at leaſt to diſcern the goodneſs of the invention.

Every great project will have the public good

good in view. If it does not bear that divine ſtamp, it will be a ſtorm, which frees the air from ſome noxious vapours, but deſolates the country where it falls. A ſuperior genius does not laviſh his labour and talents, to found the equivocal grandeur of a ſingle man upon the misfortune of millions. He will know how to attain the ſame end by nobler ways. The power of the ſovereign is connected with the happineſs of the people, and humanity goes hand in hand with true policy.

He who feels himſelf fired with that love of the public good, and who, ſtruck with the inconveniencies he obſerves, deſires to remedy them; will conſider, whether thoſe inconveniencies are not annexed to the imperfection of human nature, and of human inſtitutions. Abuſes are often like weeds, which interweave their roots with thoſe of good and uſeful plants, ſo cloſely that they cannot be pulled up without deſtroying theſe laſt. A virtuous people

will find, in a neceſſary poverty, an obſtacle to it's power. The military ſpirit deſtroys commerce, and the ſpirit of commerce ſinks the ſoul and enervates courage. Liberty leads to factions, to civil wars: too rigid order, too profound tranquility, plunge men into ſervitude. In mechaniſm, that is loſt in time which is gained in force: in politics, that is loſt in happineſs which is gained in abſolute power. The true value of the inconvenience, and of it's corrective, ſhould be fairly weighed.

THE greateſt faults, in politics, are committed by quick and narrow minds, which ſee but one object, or only one ſide of that object. In a very complicated machine, all the pieces lend each other a mutual aſſiſtance: and to judge of it's action, the whole of it muſt be conſidered together. The ſcience of government does not contain detached truths: they are all linked together. No project can be advantageous, if it is not combined on the whole maſs of the

the conſtitution. The ſpirit of the government, the religion, the manners and genius of the people, the ſtate of commerce and of the arts, population, enter into this combination. The detail of it would be immenſe: it would fill volumes. But, as this collection of knowledge compoſes what is properly the true politics; it may be ſaid in general, that a good projector ought to have the cleareſt and moſt extenſive lights relative to this ſcience.

It is natural that a people, whoſe religion condemns a part of it's citizens to celibacy and ſloth, abſorbs the ſubſiſtence of induſtry to feed idleneſs, and depreſſes their ſouls by a tyrannical ſuperſtition, ſhould not be able to embrace projects which require men, money, and courage. Under an abſolute government, nothing can proſper, if the ſucceſs depends on the activity and paſſions of the ſubject. A polite, lively and light people, will not be able to ſupport enterprizes which, by their nature,

cannot

cannot be executed but with time and patience. Eſtabliſhments which require great knowledge and underſtanding, are not made for a heavy ruſtic people, immerſed in ignorance.

Even if a project is combined on all theſe indiſpenſable conſiderations; ſtill it's ſucceſs cannot be depended on, without as profound a combination of the proper means of carrying it into execution. A ſyſtem of philoſophy is perfect, when it's parts are connected by proofs, ſupport each other mutually, and are explained with proper clearneſs. The caſe is not the ſame in regard to a political project, which does not turn upon cool and tranquil truths, like thoſe of philoſophy. The politics embrace only thoſe which rouze the ſtrongeſt paſſions, ambition and intereſt. He that would convince men of middling underſtandings of the truths which may intereſt their paſſions, muſt know how to handle them.

Upon looking over the characters of miniſters, one is ſurpriſed at the difference which hiſtorians make between thoſe ſtateſmen who have ſeized the proper opportunities when they have offered, and thoſe who have known how to make them offer. This laſt touch may be exaggerated; as it ſeems ridiculous to aſcribe to men a power which is reſerved only to Providence. There is however ſome truth in this diſtinction, if it be rightly underſtood. They who make uſe of circumſtances as they offer, are men of common parts, who ſuffer themſelves to be led by the courſe of affairs, whom the current of cuſtom carries away, and who know how to take advantage only of the momentary paſſions of men. They, on the contrary, who know how to produce circumſtances, are ſuperior geniuſes, who, by a profound knowledge of men, have learnt to prepare the way for the birth of the paſſions neceſſary to their deſigns: who, by a juſt combination of motives and characters,

characters, judge as ſurely, that, ſuch an intereſt and ſuch a man being ſuppoſed, ſuch a paſſion will be the reſult, as we judge what will be the effect of a given phyſical cauſe.

WITHOUT this ſkill to excite and direct the paſſions, no man can ever flatter himſelf that a project will ſucceed. This great art is, however, ſo little known, and ſo little cultivated, that we are hardly beyond it's firſt elements. Moſt legiſlators and ſtateſmen employ only inſufficient or reſtricting motives, and do not know the force of the ſprings which nature uſes. They ſubſtitute in their ſtead artificial paſſions, ſuch as honour and fanaticiſm, which laſt no longer than the illuſion ſubſiſts, and are always borne down by thoſe which nature dictates. Nothing is eaſier, than to force men to any thing by a dagger hung over their heads. But fear benumbs, and occaſions a fatal palſy. It is like thoſe quieting draughts, which ſtop for a while

the ſenſation of pain, but of which the frequent uſe diſorders at laſt the animal œconomy. A nation governed by the whip or flail, can be only a nation of uſeleſs and abject ſlaves.

THE ſmall number of geniuſes who have poſſeſſed this art of handling the paſſions, prove to us ſufficiently, by ſtriking examples, that men may be made any thing of, when one knows how to intereſt their paſſions. What prodigies have been performed by the ſtrength of certain conſtitutions! What eſtabliſhments, which ſeem to ſhock human nature, have been introduced by thoſe geniuſes born to govern men! All ſucceeds in able hands. Every thing becomes poſſible to the man who knows men: a knowledge abſolutely neceſſary to a projector.

IN ſtirring the great paſſions, the ſmall ones muſt not be neglected. The famous John de Witt was accuſed of ruining his republic by too much reaſon. That miniſter,

niſter, too abſtruſe in his principles, from a habit of geometry, judged of the courſe of affairs only by the true intereſts of thoſe he was to treat with: intereſts often miſunderſtood, and ſtill oftener ſacrificed to little paſſions. He did not attend ſufficiently to the puerility of the motives of the actions of the Great, to the wretched nothings which determine their proceedings, to the ſmall cauſes of great events, to the little taſtes of the little ſouls that pretend to govern the great ones. He erred through wiſdom, and was at laſt the victim of a too pure and too exalted reaſon.

If this conſideration be neceſſary in public affairs; it is not leſs ſo in thoſe which concern the interior of a ſtate. They who obey, are ſtill more ſubject to theſe littleneſſes than thoſe who govern. The people, full of prejudices and errors, deſerve ſome allowances on account of their weakneſs, and ſhould therefore have only the faireſt ſide of things ſhewn them. To

make a thing be reliſhed, it is often ſufficient only to change it's name: to give as a reſpectable antiquity, what would ſhock under the appellation of novelty. Men will be deceived for their own advantage. They are like a ſick perſon diſguſted with or prejudiced againſt a remedy, which he takes without reluctance if given him under a different form. Inſtead of openly attacking old prejudices or cuſtoms, one need only undermine them ſlowly, or deſtroy them by their contraries.

A PROJECT formed upon theſe nice and numerous conſiderations will ſtill meet with infinite difficulties from thoſe whoſe approbation is neceſſary in order to it's being carried into execution. Nature, ſparing of her gifts, does not eaſily laviſh them upon thoſe who govern nations: and if ſhe does ſometimes grant them to the ſons of Gods; an education near the throne ſeldom permits thoſe precious gifts to attain their right maturity. Yet genius only can reliſh the

the fruit of genius. None but minds of ſuch a temper as thoſe of Peter the Great and Charles XII. could have entered into ſo vaſt ſo bold a project as that of Gœrtz: nor could any but a Duke Regent have tried Law's ſyſtem without trembling. A man who forms ſuch projects as thoſe, will not dare to offer them to any but ſovereigns, whom Providence has deſtined to mark æras in the revolutions of the univerſe.

Only ſuch ſovereigns commit part of their authority to great men. We conſequently muſt not flatter ourſelves that a ſublime project of a miniſter of genius ſhould meet with approbation under the reign of a middling prince. Great miniſters muſt be as ſcarce as great princes.

If a ſovereign, indued with a ſuperior genius, chooſes miniſters like himſelf; or if a prince of a middling capacity ſuffers a great man to be raiſed to the firſt places, by happy circumſtances; ſtill can one not

expect to have the moſt advantageous projects reliſhed by the miniſter. Great ſouls are not always inacceſſible to little intereſts: elevation of mind, depth of views, the habit of approving of one's own conceptions, inſpire but too often an obſtinate prejudice againſt the ideas of others. It is ſufficient, for a plan to be diſapproved, that another than the miniſter propoſes it. Sully, with the beſt intentions for the public good, was obſtinate in oppoſing the introduction of the ſilk manufactures into France. Harſh and inflexible, he hated the author of the project, as a man who pretended to ſhare with him the confidence of his maſter: and his natural haughtineſs did not ſuffer him to adopt views which he had not formed himſelf.

If great men are ſubject to ſo much weakneſs, what can be expected from the throng of middling men, who occupy the firſt places, which they diſgrace? Confined and ignorant, they will not be able to comprehend

comprehend the extent and beauty of a plan; they will call chimerical and impoſſible, whatever exceeds the narrow ſphere of their mind and intellects. Proudly elated by their power and by flattery, they will not ſuffer that a man, oftentimes obſcure, ſhould ſeem to inſtruct them. That obſcure and preſumptuous man is probably a man of ſenſe: they are ſenſible of it; and their ſelf-love brings into play that averſion to men of ſenſe, which is the eternal attribute and indelible characteriſtic of fools. Such a miniſter will conſequently remove men of genius from him, will reject their ideas, and make their projects miſcarry. How many men of that ſtamp do we not find in place, upon viewing the preſent ſtate of Europe? How many examples do we not ſee of mean jealouſy, vile intereſt, and inſolent ignorance?

SOVEREIGNS, convinced of the neceſſity of perfecting the ſcience of government, and of the utility of projects for the happi-

neſs

neſs of ſtates, cannot obviate this infinite number of inconveniencies, but by imitating an eſtabliſhment of the Chineſe. In their empire, the miniſters, as is well known, are diſtinguiſhed into two claſſes, that of the *Thinkers*, and that of the *Expeditors*. Theſe laſt are charged with the detail and diſpatch of buſineſs, and anſwer to our common ſtateſmen. The *Thinkers*, on the contrary, have no other occupation than to form projects, or examine thoſe that are offered them. This is the ſource of the many ſingular inſtitutions, which ſtrike us with only a cold admiration, and which might prove the happineſs of a nation that would imitate them.

It is impoſſible that, according to the preſent arrangement of affairs in Europe, a miniſter can form or examine a profound project. Hurried away by the torrent of that immenſe number of objects, which form the detail of his department, he can give only moments to each. Wearied with

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that idle crowd which beſieges him, he knows not how to find time for the daily and indiſpenſably neceſſary diſpatches. How then can he combine with attention a great number of ideas, examine them with patience, and view them in every light? The great man, it is true, abandons the detail of buſineſs to ſubalterns, and only reviſes and inſpects. But few conſtitutions allow him that liberty: almoſt every where, a miniſter, who is not abſorbed in details, is looked upon as an uſeleſs miniſter.

Besides all this, that minute detail, and that immenſe multitude of affairs, at length render the ſtateſman incapable of profound meditation. The rapidity with which objects ſucceed one another, ſuffers him to give only a glance of the eye to each. He loſes the habit of examining them on all ſides, and conſequently that of meditating, which is ſo neceſſary in order to combine or appreciate a project.

It would be more advantageous for the

ſtate,

ſtate, to intruſt the care of forming and that of examining projects, to men deſtined ſolely to that occupation. A body might be created of ſuch perſons, who, totally diſengaged from the detail of buſineſs, might attend without interruption to that equally difficult and important work. The members of this body ſhould be choſen in conſequence of their known abilities and approved extent of underſtanding. Genius, and the knowledge of men, will be equally neceſſary to all. Other branches of knowledge, ſuch as that which relates to public affairs, general legiſlation, commerce, the arts, agriculture, may be diſtributed to particular perſons among them, according to their reſpective taſtes and talents. Thoſe who have the public affairs in hand, muſt be in cloſe connection with the miniſters, that they may be duely informed of the continual revolutions, the ſpirit of the government, and the intereſts of the neighbouring ſtates.

THIS body ſhall be allowed the precious liberty of thinking, and the reſt of the citizens ſhall not be denied that of writing. Without this liberty, they will not be able to diſcover thoſe conſumptive diſorders of a ſtate, which attack and undermine it imperceptibly, and, when ſtrengthened by time, do not yield to any remedy. They will be ignorant of the cries and juſt complaints of the people, who, not daring to ſpeak, often ſuffer in fatal ſilence, till they awake ſuddenly with dangerous ſtarts. What would be the caſe with England, if the liberty of the preſs was taken away? The intereſted declamations of thoſe who hate the truth, and who call all liberty licentiouſneſs, ought to give the ſovereign as little concern, as the ſhrieks of owls at the ſight of the ſun.

THE creation of ſuch a body would be of infinite ſervice. We ſhould then no longer ſee any but wiſe projects, combined with the public good, and founded on certain

tain knowledge. All thoſe abortive productions of ſuperficial plans, with which ſtateſmen are now wearied, ſubmitted then to the examination of enlightened men, would be ſtifled in their birth. The authors of ridiculous projects would not dare to expoſe themſelves to ſuch diſcerning eyes. The ſpirit of a permanent body would render eſtabliſhments more fixed, views more uniform; and the happineſs of the ſtate would no longer depend on the uncertainties and caprices of tottering miniſters, who in ſome countries ſucceed one another as rapidly as the conſuls of antient Rome. The miniſters charged with the executive part, freed from more important cares, would be able to apply themſelves wholly to their deſtination. Thoſe places would be filled more eaſily, and with greater choice. It is application and ſtrength of mind which fit a miniſter for the detail of buſineſs; and theſe qualities are much more common than real genius. The aſ-

ſemblage of theſe qualities forms thoſe rare men, whom Providence ſhews only from time to time, and whom it deſtines to change the face of empires.

It is doubtful whether we ſhall ever ſee an eſtabliſhment of this kind. Too many people, animated by intereſt and jealouſy, will oppoſe the rearing of this edifice. Nature, in the mean time, ſeems to call on all ſuperior geniuſes, to fill up the chaſm which a miſtaken ſyſtem of politics leaves open. Every diſcerning man is born a magiſtrate of his country, if he has turned his views towards the ſcience of government. His duty obliges him to communicate his ideas, in whatever obſcurity fortune may have placed him. Neither danger, nor fear of ridicule will terrify him, nor hinder him from ſpeaking uſeful truths. Had it not been for Locke, England would have languiſhed much longer than ſhe did under the dangerous diſorder of a bad coinage.

HAPPY the countries where the ſovereigns, convinced of the neceſſity of amendments, are willing to introduce them; where the miniſters do not thwart advantageous deſigns; where the common citizen dares to propoſe them; and where the people, cured of their prejudices, ſuffer their rulers to promote their felicity!

ESSAY III.

ESSAY III.

OF

LOVE

AND

JEALOUSY.

— — — — — — — Sive
Candida vicini ſubriſit mollè puella,
Cor tibi ritè ſalit?

PERS. Sat. IV.

OF
LOVE
AND
JEALOUSY.

I UNDERTAKE a nice ſubject. All thoſe who have treated of it, have ſplit upon the different rocks of a chimerical ſeverity or a groſs libertiniſm.

Two claſſes of men will always diſapprove of whatever may be ſaid, really pertinent, concerning love: thoſe of a harſh and auſtere temper, who find licentiouſneſs in every ſentiment that is not dictated by the melancholy gloom which influences their minds; and men of a frivolous turn, who, following only the caprices of a diſordered imagination, and the habit of an arbitrary mode, throw a ridicule upon all that exceeds the narrow ſphere of their ſilly ideas. The former deſerve indulgence,

in favour of the goodneſs of their intention: the latter merit only the contempt and humiliating pity, which an enlightened man owes to thoſe human inſects, that flutter inceſſantly in the vague region of opinions, without ever ſettling upon a truth.

NEITHER the immenſe number of theſe two ſorts of men, nor the ſcarceneſs of thoſe who hear reaſon inſtead of prejudices, nor the precipices between which I ſhall be obliged to ſtep, ſhall deter me from an inquiry which I think uſeful to mankind. If, in effect, the paſſions decide our happineſs or our miſery; if their nature and force determine the laws and the means of executing them; what object is more intereſting to the philoſopher, to the legiſlator, to every man who can be happy, than the knowledge of the moſt univerſal and moſt active of all paſſions?

IT is in this light that I ſhall conſider love. I ſhall content myſelf with examining the

the nature of this paſſion, and obſerving by the way the reciprocal influences between it and the government, the manners, the happineſs of nations. It is the province of thoſe who explain to us the myſteries of religion, to talk of a perfection which human nature, left to itſelf, never attains, and to diſapprove of manners which they think do not anſwer to that perfection.

To prove that the Creator has thrown the paſſions into the moral world, as the principle of all it's movements, would be ſtopping at a trivial truth. None but enthuſiaſts, ſtruck with ſome inconveniencies of our paſſions, could dream of the impoſſible neceſſity of deſtroying them: like a man who, frightened at an accident occaſioned by the fall of ſome heavy body, ſhould wiſh the extinction of gravity, and conſequently the un-hinging of the ſyſtem of the univerſe.

But if men are agreed concerning the uſe of the paſſions, they are not ſo in re-

gard to their nature. A method has been introduced into the ſciences, which may lead us into error. Scholaſtic minds, accuſtomed to divide and abſtract things, imagine they know things better by ſtripping them ſucceſſively of their different qualities. Thoſe qualities are, however, inſeparable by their nature; and by ſeparating them, mere imaginary beings, beings which exiſt only in fancy, are produced.

To ſtudy man, he is diveſted of a part of his inſtinct which inclines him to ſociety; and to examine his paſſions and ſtate, a chimera is formed of an abſtracted being, which never could exiſt. It is as neceſſary for a man to join his fellow creatures in order to form a body, as it is for bees to compoſe a ſwarm. The ſtate of nature in man, ſo far as it is put in oppoſition with that of ſociety, is therefore only a phantom of the brain, the examination of which ſerves but to increaſe our errors.

This way of conſidering man has produced

duced the diſtinction between natural and artificial paſſions. The firſt are ſuppoſed to depend ſolely on phyſical ſenſibility, and the others on the eſtabliſhment of ſociety. Yet if the inſtinct for ſociety be as natural to man as phyſical ſenſibility, as no doubt can be made but that it is, the paſſions which are a conſequence of that inſtinct are full as natural as the others. The love of glory, the taſte for friendſhip, are paſſions as little artificial as hunger and thirſt. It is true indeed that ſociety, the general manners, and education, modify thoſe paſſions; but only as to their form: their ſource remains always the ſame.

All our paſſions are thus compoſed of the ſeveral parts of inſtinct, parts which muſt not be ſeparated, when one endeavours to diſcover the nature of the paſſions. One of theſe depends as uſual on phyſical ſenſibility, and the other on that invincible bent which inclines us to ſociety.

Love is compoſed of that phyſica want

to which the Creator attaches the propagation of the ſpecies, and of that univerſal tie of the moral world, which induces us to join ourſelves to a determined object to form a ſmall ſociety. To prove this truth, one need only examine what happens to every attentive man in a numerous aſſembly of women. He will not always be moſt taken with the handſomeſt: yet the taſte for beauty is an effect of the phyſical want; a taſte which conſequently indicates, when alone, ſenſuality, and little feeling for the ſocial virtues. He will moſt frequently be determined in favour of a woman by her phyſiognomy, or graces. Now that phyſiognomy and thoſe graces are the outward ſigns of the qualities and diſpoſition of the ſoul. We conſequently determine for the qualities of that character whoſe conformity with our own, or the eſteem in which we hold them, promiſe us the greateſt happineſs in an intimate commerce.

Some philoſophers, ſtruck with the force of

of the phyſical want, admit in love only that groſs deſire. The call of nature alone, ſay they, is worth heeding in that paſſion; the reſt is only a refinement of ſelf-love, which man adds for his torment. The beaſts that follow the voice of nature only, are more happy. This cynical opinion degrades humanity, and puts us upon a level with brutes. Happily for us, the inward ſentiments of every reaſonable man, of every man freed from prejudices, contradict it flatly.

Others, either enthuſiaſts or hypocrites, baniſh from love all that intereſts the pleaſures of the ſenſes. They talk to us of an univerſal harmony, an inclination for the primitive beauty, a ſympathy of ſouls which, ſeparated, ſeek every means to rejoin each other. Thus tearing man to pieces, they form to themſelves a phantom of which experience ſhews them the non-exiſtence, by making them feel that they have a body as well as a ſoul.

Of theſe two falſe and over-ſtrained opinions, the laſt is however the moſt ſufferable. Upon ſeeing two ſtrangers, one of whom ſhould be moſt ſmitten with the mind and graces, and the other with beauty, I ſhould be prejudiced in favour of the former. Regularity of features, fineneſs of complexion, are not the marks of a fair ſoul. The perſon who is ſtruck with them only, is ſenſual, and little fit to attain to virtue or great talents. He that eſteems, that cheriſhes the ſigns of beauty in the ſoul, proves to me, by that analogy of ideas, his diſpoſition to acquire, or his happineſs in poſſeſſing the moſt eſtimable qualities. The perſon that is taken by the eye only, deſerves to be deſpiſed. A beautiful, as well as very ſenſible lady declares, that ſhe looks upon this unhappy diſpoſition to be one of the greateſt of defects.

The inſtinct for ſociety, being a paſſion, muſt have been modified according to the ſtate of the ſocieties eſtabliſhed. Education, cuſtom,

cuſtom, government, religion, the arts, concur to frame the opinion that is conceived of love, the eſteem annexed to it, and the various manners in which it is treated. One while, the phyſical want appears in all it's force: at another time, the inclination for ſociety counter-balances it, and ſuffers art to add to nature.

An infant ſociety, whoſe ſubſiſtance is but precarious, is wholly taken up with providing the firſt neceſſaries of life: many things, the property of which cannot be ſecured by reaſon of the uncertain ſtate of that yet un-formed ſociety, remain in common. The members of ſuch a ſociety, embarraſſed for a livelihood, feel love as a part of their wants, and ſatisfy it as groſsly as they do hunger and thirſt. Their vagrant life hindering them from having any peculiar poſſeſſion, their women will be almoſt common.

The ſavages preſent us the picture of an infant ſociety: they treat love in a manner ſuitable

ſuitable to their barbarous ſtate. To ſee a woman for the firſt time, and to receive the greateſt favours ſhe can grant, are things quite uſual among them.

ENCOMIUMS are beſtowed upon what is called the vigorous, the manly manners of ancient times; times when fierce men abandoned themſelves to wrath, to revenge, to the moſt violent paſſions; when a woman opened her arms to receive the firſt comer. Is not this praiſing barbariſm? Is it not commending the ſweetneſs of the acorn, whilſt we have plenty of the moſt delicious meats?

As a ſociety acquires ſtrength and conſiſtence, it's manners are ſoftened, and the ſpirit of property introduces itſelf. It is as natural to wiſh to be the ſole poſſeſſor of a fine woman, as of a convenient houſe, or a fruitful field. When all the faculties of the ſoul are no longer engroſſed by care and ſolicitude for abſolute neceſſaries, the comforts of ſociety are better felt, the ſocial virtues

virtues are better known. The deſires of love join with friendſhip, and that paſſion aſſumes a more decent form.

THESE alterations in the manners of men are effected only by ſlow degrees, and in the courſe of ſeveral ages. The Greeks, not far removed from the heroic times, which might rather be called ſavage and barbarous, retained an aſtoniſhing roughneſs of manners. Their way of conſidering and treating love is ſhockingly groſs, and artleſs to a degree that diſguſts.

WHEN a ſociety has ſubſiſted for any length of time, when it has aggrandized itſelf and acquired riches, and when thoſe riches have favoured the culture of the ſciences and arts, it neceſſarily falls into an exceſs of luxury. Luxury being by it's nature inclined to abuſe all property, will alſo abuſe that of women. They will again become almoſt common: manners grow corrupted, decency diſappears. What ſcenes of groſs and unbridled vices do not

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the voluptuous courts of the ſucceſſors of Alexander, and Rome under the tyrannical government of her emperors, preſent to our view?

THIS is the circle preſcribed to the form of love, as well as to public happineſs. We are at firſt barbarians, and conſequently uncivilifed and unhappy. Quitting that barbariſm, we become for a while acquainted with happineſs and politeneſs: we then are plunged into luxury: that luxury enervates and corrupts us, and our refinements throw us back into unhappineſs and barbariſm.

A ROMAN lady reproached a Britiſh lady with the barbarous cuſtom of ancient Britain, which abandoned it's fine women to all warriors. "We are as much barbarians "as you," anſwered the Briton: "the "only difference is, that we do openly "with men of merit, what you do pri-"vately with the meaneſt of men."

THE form of a government generally determines

termines the manners of a people: it ought alſo to determine the manner of treating love. In republics, whoſe conſtitution depends on virtue, the manners are ſimple and pure. The ſpirit of patriotiſm, the deſire of glory, poſſeſs all the faculties of thoſe republican ſouls, and leave but little activity to the other paſſions. The civil inſtitutions are ſtable and reſpected. Love, in a republic, will conſequently preſerve it's natural ſimplicity; a ſimplicity which the corrupt ages called groſsneſs: marriages will be the more ſecure.

All the members of a good republic think themſelves concerned in the government. Inceſſantly buſied with great intereſts, they feel little of thoſe humiliating hours of idle wearineſs of mind, the fruits of in-occupation, which make men run after frivolous amuſements, honoured with the name of pleaſures. They will live little with women, who, by the ſimplicity of their manners, are kept within doors.

They

They will give them only the moments conſecrated to domeſtic friendſhip. The idle, the ſenſual, will be obliged to ſeek for diſguſt among deſpicable women. Hiſtory informs us, that this method of treating love was that of the Greeks and Romans in the nobleſt times of their republics. It ſtill is, in general, that of the Engliſh, of thoſe imitators of the old republicans, who, abſorbed in political ſpeculations, ſcorn the commerce of women.

THE political ſlavery of deſpotiſm neceſſarily draws after it civil ſlavery and domeſtic ſervitude. Among the people of thoſe unhappy nations, a wife is only the ſlave of her huſband. The great put a fine woman into their ſeraglio, as we put a fine bird into an aviary. The number of theſe melancholy victims ſhews the grandeur of their maſter. Theſe women, whoſe ſouls are enervated, whoſe minds are deſtroyed, and whoſe ſentiments are debaſed by a bad education, are not capable of inſpiring a real

real attachment. A ſcornful maſter ſees them, to paſs an idle hour, out of a habitude of groſs pleaſure. In thoſe wretched countries, only the phyſical want is known. Jealouſy, the natural conſequence of that ſlavery, baniſhes the women from ſociety.

Such is the love of the orientals. What praiſe has a modern author given to the Turks! They attach themſelves to beauty only, ſays he, and neglect the perſon. Should I praiſe a man who ſtuffs himſelf with victuals in private, and that in a ſlovenly manner, by ſaying, that man loves to ſit at table only to eat? He is inſenſible of the good company which gives others ſo delicious a reliſh to their repaſts.

It is in monarchies that love takes the moſt different forms. Honour, the great ſpring of that kind of government, keeps it's nature in great ſouls, and remains what it ought to be, the love of true glory. In little ſouls it degenerates into a deſire of diſtinctions, into vanity. In a ſtate, where

every individual endeavours to raiſe himſelf, they whoſe feeble talents cannot aſpire to great enterprizes, form others proportioned to their weakneſs. Not being able to conquer enemies, they endeavour to triumph over the prejudices of women. A ſort of glory is tacked to theſe frivolous conqueſts, to ſhew the merit of which ſuch arguments are alledged as ought often to humble the pride of him that uſes them. Theſe ridiculous conquerors, unable to perform things truly great, ſtrive to make themſelves amends in their own conceit, by bringing little ones into vogue. Such is the pedigree of foppery.

Few citizens, in a monarchy, are charged with the cares of government: few will know how to nouriſh the great paſſions, ambition, the love of true glory. They will purſue thoſe which are more eaſily ſatisfied. Love, with them, will act a principal part. The idleneſs of the men, and the freedom of the women, the natural

conſequences of this form of government, will produce a continual commerce between the two ſexes. Thoſe women who ſhall feel themſelves poſſeſſed of talents, and who cannot have employment, will give into intrigue, and will have a great influence in affairs. This influence of the fair ſex, joined to the foppiſhneſs of the men, will beget a romantic idea of love: great ſentiments will be held in honour.

A GREAT monarchy, which ſuppoſes power and riches, falls into great luxury, as it's power and riches increaſe. If luxury gets poſſeſſion of a nation, this ſublime idea of love will vaniſh, and be ſucceeded by one quite oppoſite. It is the nature of luxury to ſubſiſt by a continual change of taſtes, and this reſtleſsneſs of taſtes leads to fancies. Enervated ſouls can no longer fix to any thing, but glory in their inconſiſtence and levity: falſe delicacy, dwelling upon no one object, exhauſts them all, and, finding no longer the means of ſatis-

fying itſelf with what really exiſts, forms to itſelf phantoms. This habit of inconſtancy and falſe taſte extends to the mode of the paſſions. A ſolid attachment becomes ridiculous: pleaſure is run after, without being found. Inſtead of love, connections are formed founded on vanity, and that paſſion is no longer any thing more than the wrong turn of a diſordered brain. I ſhall have occaſion to ſpeak again of theſe effects of luxury, in examining the taſte of our age.

If the ſpirit of the government modifies the idea and form of love, religion produces the ſame effect. How many falſe religions are there not, the followers of which think to honour the Deity by the moſt diſſolute debauchery? This idea leaves thoſe blind people only a diſguſting form of love. They will neither know nor liſten to any thing but the groſs inſtinct of nature.

The dogmas of Mahomet have undoubtedly

doubtedly contributed to the contempt in which his followers hold women. The Muſulmen look upon them as the inſtruments of their pleaſures in the life to come: they cannot have a higher idea of them in this. Their contempt preſerves them from all attachment to a degraded ſex, and prevents the activity of ſocial inſtinct.

A RELIGION which requires great purity of manners, inſpires too ſublime an idea of love, and prepares the way for a fanaticiſm to which this paſſion is ſubject. This effect will be the more certain, if a ſanctified prejudice attaches great merit to the entire ſuppreſſion of ſo ſtrong and natural a paſſion. Is it not a melancholy thing to ſee men, perpetually in contradiction with themſelves, require an impoſſibility, deviſe imaginary virtues, and cheriſh only what is difficult and uſeleſs? This method is of dangerous conſequence: men, inceſſantly expoſed to temptation, or to the neceſſity of offending againſt imaginary

duties, get a habit of neglecting thoſe that are real; their ſouls grow hardened, and loſe the innate taſte for virtue. Happy are they whoſe duties do not contradict the voice of nature!

The Greeks, the Romans, had a plain, a pleaſing religion, void of dogmas. It ordered them only the obſervance of certain feſtivals, and conſequently had little influence over their manners. It was rather their manners that regulated their religion.

Let us not think the culture of the arts and ſciences a matter of indifference towards determining the ideas of a people with reſpect to love. The arts, daughters of luxury, nouriſh their mother in their turn. The taſte which they ſpread modifies our manners. To this taſte, and to that of the ſciences, the Greeks owed that noble ſimplicity, which charms ſo much thoſe who are worthy to know it.

Philosophy rectifies our ideas of all objects: it deſtroys fanaticiſm and ſuperſtition,

ſition. It conſequently purifies the prejudices and fanaticiſm of love. If the philoſophical ſpirit ever penetrates into Spain, it will deliver that ſenſible, but often too enthuſiaſtic nation, from all it's romantic follies.

NOTHING proves more plainly the influence of the government, religion, and manners of a people, over the form of this paſſion, than an extraordinary event, which, by it's ſingularity, and the extent of it's effects, merits a particular examination. The migration of the barbarous nations, which over-ran Europe, changed the face of part of the known world. The ſpirit of their government ſubſiſts in the modern governments, and their manners are the ſource of ours. The remains of barbariſm are ſtill predominant, notwithſtanding our pretended politeneſs.

IT is very probable, that theſe people of the North and of great Germany were only a race of northern Tartars, who, driven

on by the fiercer Tartars, advanced, like the waves of the ſea, till they met with a land fit to be overflowed. It is known, that the cuſtom of vaſſals of every kind always was, and ſtill is, in uſe among the Tartar nations. The people iſſued from that race could not but bring with them into Europe the feudal government with all it's conſequences; as in fact they did.

WHAT we know of the religion of thoſe people ſhews it to have been quite ſenſual. Odin, the great legiſlator of the North, promiſes to his warriors a paradiſe where they will enjoy all the pleaſures of the ſenſes, drink delicious beer, and have beautiful women. Already, in this life, the poſſeſſion of a fine woman was the reward of courage. Prejudices ſo favourable to the ſex gained him great diſtinction. The people of the North in general, and the Germans in particular, ſaw ſomething divine in women: they were conſulted in weighty affairs: they were the propheteſſes of the nation; their perſons were ſacred.

THE independence of the vaſſals permitted them to exerciſe freely that fierce valour which characteriſed the people of the North. That liberty, joined to their veneration for women, gave birth to an adventuring ſpirit. Soon after the beginning of the vulgar æra, the ſociety of the Wickingars aroſe; a ſociety of pirates, who cruiſed the ſeas in queſt of glory and fine women. The ſingular adventures to which this vagabond life expoſed them, together with ſuperſtition and ignorance, produced all the chimæras and monſters of knight-errantry: duels, dragons, giants, inchanted princeſſes, the honour of protecting, of reſcuing theſe fair ones, and of defeating their proud oppreſſors. The Normans were adventurers of the ſame kind, who joined to the fanaticiſm of chivalry an ardent deſire of plunder.

THE fund of theſe romantic manners ſtill remained notwithſtanding the chriſtianity which theſe barbarians embraced by degrees.

degrees. The liberty, or rather the licentiouſneſs of the feudal government, occaſioned continual wars between the too neighbouring vaſſals. Theſe petty tyrants, always armed, knowing no occupation but that of fighting, nor any other merit than a ſavage valour, ſtripped each other of the booty they had got from their unhappy ſlaves. Fine women were ſtolen, juſt as cattle were. The confuſion becoming too great, thoſe of more elevated minds made their glory conſiſt in protecting the oppreſſed. Occaſions enough offered to exerciſe and obſerve inceſſantly the noble inſtitutes of chivalry. Of theſe inſtitutes, the moſt ſublime was that of protecting beauty, the object of the admiration of the anceſtors of theſe knights errant.

The authority of the ſovereigns acquired ſtrength by degrees, and the vaſſals no longer daring to make war upon each other, theſe brave champions found themſelves reduced to the melancholy neceſſity of exerciſing

exerciſing their courage in private. This gladiator taſte had however a retroſpect to the divinities of former times: favours of the ladies, and their glory, were the cauſe of battle. The idleneſs of the middle age made men ſeek for diverſions, and their bad taſte directed them to none but rude and ſavage ones. They amuſed themſelves with maiming one another in tournaments: the ladies judged the combatants, and this deference, the conſequence of the old veneration for their ſex, ſtill increaſed that which the fair ones then enjoyed. Knights ran from one end of Europe to the other to challenge all other knights, and force them to confeſs, that the lady of the fanatic adventurer's thoughts was the faireſt of the fair.

FRANCIS the Firſt (of France) drew the women from the obſcurity of a domeſtic life, uſhered them into ſociety, and occaſioned a more extenſive commerce between the two ſexes. The dawn of a greater politeneſs

liteneſs produced but little alteration in the received ideas: the impreſſion before communicated to the ſhattered imaginations of men, ſubſiſted. Out of the rubbiſh of barbarous manners was formed a monſter called GALLANTRY, a kind of apotheoſis, which made goddeſſes of beings not always worthy to be ranked even among the human ſpecies. The worſhip which had been paid before only to a choſen few, was ſoon extended to the whole ſex. Women became ſacred objects, alone worthy of the attention of all mankind. Encomiums were given to the politeneſs of a monarch, who extended to the meaneſt female ſervant, an idolatry with which princeſſes ought to think themſelves highly flattered. The approbation of the women determined the merit of the men: their conqueſt reflected as much luſtre as a military exploit. The men laviſhed their incenſe upon every altar, to render theſe divinities propitious to them.

It is pleaſant to ſee with what gravity ſome authors, to eſtabliſh the pre-eminence of the moderns, accuſe the ancients of having been ſtrangers to gallantry. Is it then a reproach to the Greeks and Romans, that their anceſtors were neither Normans, Goths, nor Vandals? Is it a defect in them, that they knew enough of truth and nature, not to give into a ridiculous fanaticiſm?

This ſpirit of gallantry, combined with the effect of luxury in monarchies, produced at length our manner of conſidering and treating love. We muſt not flatter ourſelves: our ideas, our manners, with reſpect to this article, are, without exception, the moſt irrational that any age ever deviſed, and the moſt diſtant from nature. The remains of idolatry in favour of the women, the corruption of taſte, the inconſtancy of faſhions in regard to behaviour, compoſe ſo ſtrange a mixture, that one can no longer find any natural paſſion in it.

Love now is only the taſte of pleaſure allied with vanity. Social inſtinct does not touch vulgar ſouls, of which there are many at all times, and which, in the preſent ſtate of things, are weakened likewiſe by example. Men ſeek for pleaſures, and do not find them, becauſe the greateſt have their ſource in the heart and in the ſocial affections. They who ſeek them only in the ſenſes, will ſoon find a chaſm in themſelves, which renders them uneaſy, and makes them run from one object to another. This uneaſineſs produces in it's turn libertiniſm, an irregularity which ought not to be leſs ſhameful in thoſe who give themſelves up to it with women of a certain claſs, than in thoſe who abandon themſelves to the very refuſe of the people. The contempt with which ſome women load themſelves by the indecency of their behaviour, nouriſhes this libertiniſm: none but mean ſouls can attach themſelves to a deſpicable object. The individuals of both

ſexes,

ſexes, who abandon themſelves groſsly to pleaſure, prepare for themſelves, after a youth full of thorns, a miſerable old age. All that then remains to them, is public contempt, bitter remorſe, an exhauſted heart, and an impaired conſtitution.

Some have diſtinguiſhed two ſources of love; the one ſeated in the ſenſes, the other in the head. This laſt, which depends only on curioſity, and on a diſordered imagination, is, we are told, the moſt common. If the diſtinction be not a good one, it proves at leaſt that the love of our days is not ſo much influenced by the libertiniſm of the ſenſes, as by an ill-placed vanity.

If, in effect, the ſenſes determined the choice of the object beloved, men would always chooſe what affects them moſt. But it is not faſhionable to be attached to the object that pleaſes: the preference is given to that which is likely to be moſt talked of, and whoſe conqueſt promiſes vanity the greateſt

greateſt portion of that deſpicable glory, which flatters corrupted hearts. The preference is given to women who, by dint of vilifying themſelves, have acquired a name, and whoſe illuſtrious reputation reflects back upon their lovers. Women, like thoſe ſavages who eſteem a man in proportion to his being covered with frightful ſcars, love a man only in proportion to the number of women he has ruined. They ſnatch from each other thoſe travelling trophies of the favours granted by their ſex. Neither merit nor accompliſhments are required to make a man a favourite of the ladies: he need only declare himſelf illuſtrious in that career.

To make one conqueſt that is talked of, is not enough: the number muſt be multiplied. Our frivolous heroes and heroines purſue this noble ambition with ſuch ardor, that, like Alexander who wanted another world, they ſeem to regret that there is but one ſex to conquer. What abject meanneſs

meanneſs muſt there be in the ſoul of that man, who can pride himſelf upon the poor advantage of ſeducing women! Could he think it a merit in him, if he reflected a moment on the ridiculous motives which moſt commonly determine the choice of women; if he conſulted experience, which proves to us, that the favorites of the fair ſex are generally the contempt of our's? It is given to few ſuperior men, to join the truly amiable with the really ſolid qualities; and it is given to few women, to reliſh thoſe extraordinary men. Can a thinking woman ſatisfy an enlightened ſelf-love by thoſe multiplied conqueſts, if ſhe conſiders, that men who are deſpiſed laviſh their incenſe without choice or deſign, and that it is ſufficient to be a woman to be the object of their addreſſes?

To vary theſe conqueſts, it is neceſſary not to remain long attached to the ſame perſon. Laſting paſſions are ridiculous; inconſtancy is a part of our manners; le-

vity is faſhionable. One of theſe light inſects of ſociety inſtanced to me as a proof of the barbariſm of a conſiderable court, that there were lovers there who had been fond of each other ever ſince the preceding reign. Though a man finds happineſs in a rational attachment, he muſt break it off in order to be faſhionable. To ſtop the circulation of effects deemed the property of the public, would be indeed a public robbery. Lovers are reduced to as melancholy a ſituation, as that of the antient kings of Spain, who, let them like the place they were at never ſo well, were obliged to change their abode at a certain ſtated time, becauſe it was the cuſtom. What can be more unreaſonable, than to ſubject one's enjoyments of life to the caprices of an arbitrary mode? Ought we to imitate that ideot, who aſked other people, whether he had much pleaſure? We muſt aſk ourſelves that queſtion.

Our manners in regard to love are very diſadvantageous

diſadvantageous to the happineſs of individuals, and to that of the public. We deviate from nature; who never fails to puniſh thoſe that are deaf to her voice. Inſtead of hearing her, when ſhe calls us to real pleaſures, we run after only the emptineſs of vanity. We no longer know pleaſure; we taſte but the opinion of it: we embrace a cloud. If women were ſenſible of their own intereſts, they would know how much modeſty and decency embelliſh them and heighten their charms: how much thoſe amiable qualities enliven and add to every enjoyment. They would alſo know, on the other hand, how much boldneſs and affected airs render them and their commerce diſagreeable and diſguſting, and ſpoil all their pleaſures. Both ſexes would feel, that their happineſs requires connections founded on ſomething more ſolid than the ſlight impreſſion of an accidental glance, or a tranſient liking.

THERE is an effect of theſe manners ſtill

more fatal to our happineſs. The habit of that inconſtancy, of that levity, extends to the whole conduct of life, even to the moſt eſſential duties. A paſſion, which engroſſes the years of our life the moſt ſuſceptible of impreſſion, gives the ſoul a turn difficult to be altered. By ſuffering frivolouſneſs and levity to enter into the manner of treating love, men accuſtom themſelves to uſe it on all occaſions. The taſte for virtue, which requires conſtant culture, is loſt: men grow more afraid of the imputation of ridicule, than of the reproaches of vice. Inconſtancy, the daughter and mother of weakneſs, enervates their ſouls, and renders them incapable of any elevated ſentiment. It is not with reaſon that the reſt of Europe accuſe the French of having ſpoilt all nations, by infecting them with the taſte of foppery.

THIS influence is full as viſible in reſpect to the mind and talents. Somebody has ſaid, that the introduction of coaches was the

the ruin of the ſciences and of letters. One may ſay with greater juſtice, that our falſe gallantry circumſcribes the talents, and contracts their ſphere. Frivolouſneſs, by bringing into vogue and conferring honours upon little talents, the moſt eaſy to be acquired, diſcourages men from attempting great things, which require labour and application. Enervated minds, minds abſorbed in trifles, will no longer be able to ſubject themſelves to that application, nor to attempt thoſe things. We have amiable miniſters, pretty captains, gallant philoſophers, and few great men.

We value only what intereſts us, and ſelf-love readily places that intereſt in qualities ſimilar to thoſe we think ourſelves poſſeſſed of. The generality of the ſex will eſteem in men, only a merit analogous to that of women. We muſt allow the ſex the amiable qualities, the agreeable ones of every kind: but, may it be ſaid without offending that fair half of the hu-

man ſpecies, the ſituation, and particularly the education of women, oppoſe their acquiring thoſe qualities which are truly eſtimable and uſeful to ſociety? A man deſirous to pleaſe all women, will neglect true merit, and ſet a value upon thoſe trifling qualifications only, which promiſe him the favour of the object of his adoration. How many do we ſee of theſe amphibious beings, more women than the women themſelves!

THAT is not all: the remains of this worſhip, extended to the whole ſex in general, lead to a diſſipation fatal to talents. To make one's ſelf beloved, it is neceſſary to go through the whole ritual of the ceremonies of gallantry, which, though now abridged, requires time; and that time, precious and indiſpenſable in order to acquire merit, is loſt in the commerce of moſt women. That commerce throws a man into frivolous and unſatisfactory amuſements. The women, to divert their idle hours,

hours, and fill up the chaſms of their lives, give the name of pleaſure to whatever can ſatisfy their little ſouls; and thoſe empty pleaſures are exactly calculated to run away with the time which men ought to employ in fitting themſelves for ſolid qualifications. We grow deliciouſly weary of ourſelves in the company of women, becauſe they make us believe that we are receiving pleaſure.

I KNOW, that this loſs of time is thought to be repaid by the acquiſition of a knowledge of the world, and of politeneſs. Theſe advantages are, however, more imaginary than real. The bad education of women gives a ſameneſs of manners to their ſex in general, which does not ſuffer characters to diſplay their diverſity. It has been ſaid of the French, that they are all birds of the ſame feather: this ſaying may, with greater reaſon, be applied to women. By knowing ſome, even of the moſt celebrated, one knows them nearly all. The knowledge of human nature will be little advanced by ſtudying the fair ſex.

Politeness will gain perhaps full as little by their commerce. We become polite by frequenting thoſe for whom we have a deference and eſteem, who by their ſuperiority cruſh our ſelf-love, and curb the effects of our pride. The generality of women, by their conduct and by the nature of their ſlender merit, exempt us entirely from that deference and eſteem. Their turn of converſation, their manner of life, thoſe long liſts of vilifying adventures, the ſcandal of precipitate ruptures, ſhew us ſufficiently, what kind of ſentiments are inſpired by frivolous beings, deſpotically ſubjugated by others ſtill more contemptible. This commerce keeps up, and ſometimes over-ſtrains civility: true politeneſs will make but little progreſs in it.

This ſpirit of gallantry, of which we have ſeen the effects on our manners, poiſons alſo one of the ſources of our greateſt and moſt rational pleaſures. Learning, and

and works of genius of every kind, feel this infection, which deprives us of the ſatisfaction attached ſolely to the imitation of nature. We loſe that noble ſimplicity, ſo charming to every ingenuous mind, and inſtead of true images and natural paſſions, we form chimeras. If we take pleaſure in them, we are in the caſe of our ruſtic anceſtors, enchanted by the gigantic adventures of knight-errantry.

Our dramatic works turn wholly upon a ſophiſticated paſſion, moſt commonly painted in an affected ſtile, compoſed of inſipid madrigals. A cold metaphyſic of the heart and ſentiments renders them languid. The writers of romance fall into the ſame fault, or into the contrary one of a filthy licentiouſneſs. Love takes the lead in all theſe works, and is the ſpring of every action: the other paſſions, more noble, more uſeful to the happineſs of the public and to that of individuals, act no longer any part in them. The poets keep

up

up the deluſion of this amorous fanaticiſm; and our youth, by reading theſe performances, accuſtom themſelves to look upon love as the principal affair of life. Finding, when more advanced in years, the contradiction between the practice and the theory, they depart from the moral inſtinct, to liſten only to the phyſical; they abandon themſelves to debauchery. It is the nature of errors to involve in their own ruin the truths which once accompanied them.

THE graveſt works are disfigured with the jargon and the taſte of gallantry. Inſtead of elevating the minds of women up to the ſciences, the ſciences are let down to the level of their little capacities. Philoſophers ſpeak the language of the toilet; and the uſe of that burleſque and monſtrous jargon is called elucidating an abſtruſe ſubject: as if the beauties of ſtile were ſomething more than a proper manner of conveying ſuitable ideas; than a happy thought taken from the very nature of

of the ſubject. The taſte of true eloquence, and the pleaſures of the mind, are conſequently loſt.

THE ſum of the happineſs of individuals conſtitutes the happineſs of ſociety. If our manners, in regard to the method of treating love, are contrary to our happineſs, they intereſt equally the legiſlator, who ought to watch over the advancement of public happineſs, and the philoſopher, whoſe duty it is to point out to men the beſt way to arrive at that happineſs. Whatever obſtructs the progreſs of virtue and talents, is of the greateſt importance to thoſe who govern ſtates.

THERE is alſo another conſequence of gallantry, which, without influencing directly the welfare of individuals, is very diſadvantageous to ſociety. A ſtate cannot be powerful and happy, but by the number of a well conſtituted people. Gallantry ſtints and prejudices population. According to our religion and the ſpirit of our governments,

ments, the increaſe of the inhabitants of a country cannot be effected without inconveniencies, but by the increaſe and the ſtability of marriages. Frivolouſneſs renders marriage ridiculous, and great luxury makes it burdenſome. People accuſtomed to extend their inclinations to the whole ſex, can no longer fix it to a particular object. They are afraid to engage in a ſtate liable to ſo many inconveniencies; if circumſtances oblige them to marry, they enter upon wedlock with an exhauſted worn-out heart: tacit ſeparations enſue, which are not leſs hurtful than celibacy. We need not wonder at ſeeing a part of Europe become depopulated, and moſt of it's illuſtrious families extinguiſh by degrees. Not to ſpeak of debauchery and it's fatal conſequences, gallantry is the principal cauſe of this depopulation.

If the effects of our manners ought to awaken the attention of thoſe who are deſtined to govern and inſtruct mankind, that attention

attention will be directed to the proper means of remedying the diſadvantages occaſioned by the wrong manner of conſidering and treating love. It is difficult, without doubt, to change entirely, or all at once, the manners of a nation. They are connected with ſo many different objects, with the religion of the ſtate, with the conſtitution, with luxury, with the ſtate of the ſciences and arts; that, without violent ſhocks, which might endanger an empire, it would be impoſſible to introduce a ſudden change. But if powerful remedies, which would cure the diſeaſe, are dangerous, there are innocent ones, capable of palliating it, and of abating it's ſymptoms.

Our manners are ſo interwoven with our luxury, that this laſt cannot be touched without altering the former. One might conſequently be apt to think, that in order to rectify our manners and render them more pure, it will be ſufficient to ſet bounds

bounds to luxury. But this queſtion, concerning the utility and the dangers of luxury, the bounds proper to be preſcribed to it, and the means of bringing back to ſimplicity a people accuſtomed to effeminacy, is a moſt complicated and moſt difficult problem in matters of morality and politics: a problem, the ſolution of which will not be ſoon given, and of which the execution would be liable to infinite difficulties. It is however certain, that our luxury is carried much too far, and that a wiſe legiſlator will always reſtrain that luxury of fancy, which leads to frivoloufneſs. This ſort of luxury, diſcredited by the example of the ſovereign, and confined within it's natural bounds, will give way to a more noble luxury, which is not contrary to rectitude of manners, and which adds to them a delicate urbanity.

The education that is given to the individuals of the ſeveral claſſes of a people, determines their manners. It is that only which

which forms the moral man. I do not ſpeak of that which is received in boarding ſchools and colleges; an imperfect education, ſpoilt by a race of miſchievous animals, creatures who ſeem to conſpire in ſecret to vitiate and deſtroy ſenſe and reaſon. The effects of this firſt education are too well known to require any proofs of their badneſs, or to want the pointing out of any remedies. I ſpeak rather of the ſecond education, which our friends and our reading give us; more important perhaps than the firſt. The inſtinct for imitation is ſo ſtrong, that we always take the colour of the objects which ſurround us.

YOUNG people, upon their being taken from a ſchool or a college, are put too early into the *vortex* of the world. Without fixed principles, without the neceſſary knowledge of life, their ſouls, defenceleſs and open to all impreſſions, copy after the example of perſons older than themſelves. Habit ſtrengthens thoſe impreſſions, whe-

ther good or bad. If ridiculous or hurtful prejudices concerning love prevail in ſociety, the two ſexes mutually corrupt each other: the men ſpoil the women by a mean adulation, and the frivolouſneſs of the women reflects back upon the men. By preventing this too early entrance of youth into the world, by enabling them to live with ſenſible and enlightened men, more truth and decency would be introduced into our manners.

The reading of works deſtined for the amuſement or inſtruction of a nation, is not leſs deciſive in regard to the manners of that nation. The leſſons of thoſe ſilent maſters are not the leſs attended to and reliſhed, by their being conſulted in private. Since the reciprocal influence of the manners and the paſſions is ſo great, it would be a ſtudy worthy of a ſtateſman and a philoſopher, to run over the works of the love-painters of the different nations and ages of the world, and to compare their

pictures

pictures of that paſſion with the manners of thoſe nations and the ſtate of their governments. Romances, ſo deſpiſed and in general ſo contemptible, may, after that inquiry, equal hiſtory in point of utility.

MAGISTRATES ſometimes take offence at and proceed againſt innocent books, dangerous only to the intereſts of a cabal. They paſs over thoſe licentious productions, the poiſon of which infects furtively every imagination and corrupts every heart. I am ſenſible how difficult and even dangerous it is, to cramp the republic of letters, to ſtop the liberty of the preſs, and to preſcribe to men the ſpecies of their amuſements. I know that the contempt of all good men brands ſufficiently thoſe vile pens and their ſhameful productions, and that the ſentence of the public avenges virtue of the inſults offered her by thoſe miſcreant poiſoners. Yet the evil remains, and more effectual remedies would be requiſite to ſtop the inundation of ſcandalous

books, and ſave weak minds from the temptation of reading them.

THERE are works of another kind, the reading of which is boldly avowed, which are even put into the hands of youth as neceſſary to their education, and which are nevertheleſs as dangerous perhaps as the moſt licentious. Theſe are thoſe which, by giving too high an idea of love, exalt it almoſt into a virtue, and thoſe which, miſtaking it's nature, make it an atrocious crime. Romances, and the many dramatic performances, the authors of which become the apoſtles of the fanaticiſm of love, nouriſh and ſpread frivolouſneſs and it's diſadvantageous conſequences. I have already ſpoken of the bad effect which theſe works have upon manners and morals. It would be better to give a true notion of this paſſion, to determine the part it naturally acts, and to fix the value that ſhould be ſet upon it. We gain nothing by the falſe ſublime which is attached to it. Error always

always occaſions irregularities: truth alone leads to virtue.

AMONG thoſe who declaim ſo pompouſly againſt love, there are who give the lye to their own ſentiments, and preach againſt their conſcience. Theſe hypocrites deſerve equally the contempt and the averſion of mankind, whom they deceive out of a vile motive of intereſt and a deſire to rule. There are others, who deceive themſelves, and who would deſerve only pity, if they remained ſatisfied with deceiving themſelves in ſilence, and without ſetting their errors up for dogmas. Auſtere and narrow minds, upon the ſtrength of a few arbitrary principles, eaſily confound weakneſſes with vice. It is not by vague declamations againſt the paſſions which compoſe our eſſence, that men are rendered virtuous; it is by explaining to them the end of thoſe paſſions, their uſes, and the bounds within which it is neceſſary to keep them: it is by ſpeaking to the hearts of men, by

ſhewing them their intereſts, that they are led to their duties. What benefit can accrue to our manners from thoſe overſtrained declamations, vulgarly called books of morality? Works which, in general, preſent us only prejudices, and of which the authors, aſſuming the language of deſpotiſm, tell us, this is virtue, that is vice; for ſo we determine it to be.

THESE remedies will, however, be but feeble palliatives, in compariſon of the ſpecific which would heal radically the injuries done to ſociety by the prejudices concerning love. This only remedy would be, a better education of the women. That which is given them is turned only towards trifles: it fills with mere nothings, heads made for better purpoſes: it gives a looſe to the wildeſt paſſions.

IT is afflicting to ſee how many excellent qualities this negligence leaves uncultivated. A delicate organiſation, a great ſenſibility, a happy imagination, lively paſſions,

paſſions, give the fair ſex an univerſal diſpoſition to every talent and every virtue. Let us do juſtice to the women: among thoſe whoſe ſituation or circumſtances have enabled them to receive a good education, or who have been ſo fortunate as to acquire it of themſelves, I have found more talents, and more real merit, than among men; and what is more, thoſe eſtimable qualities accompanied with the ſmiling graces, natural to their ſex, but unattainable by our's.

If theſe excellent diſpoſitions were cultivated with more care, they would prove the happineſs of both ſexes, and that of ſociety. The women muſt know little their intereſts, if they would not concur in ſo advantageous a change. The time for being young and pretty, is very ſhort. That age once paſt, the woman who had only beauty to recommend her, returns to nothing: being no longer propped up by the frail ſupport of the flatteries of men, ſhe

feels a chaſm, a wearineſs of mind, which plunges her into ſlander, or into a froward devotion. If, on the contrary, ſhe has a mind well cultivated, and merit, ſhe finds reſources within herſelf; ſhe ſecures to herſelf, by her talents, an empire over men, more pleaſing than that of beauty; and ſhe will be, in a more advanced age, the delight of her friends, as ſhe was before that of her lovers. Even in her youth, her ſuperior underſtanding will ſave her from thoſe humiliating choices, thoſe ſhameful attachments, which diſhonour more than the paſſion itſelf: ſhe will know how to reliſh a man of merit, whoſe converſation leads her curioſity into new countries, and feeds agreeably the vivacity of her mind. Wearineſs of mind, that cruel enemy to the ſex, will vaniſh: ſhe will know true pleaſures, of which frivolous beings ſee only the ſhadow. She will no longer be forced to judge of men by their appearance: ſhe will be ſcreened from the humiliating ſuſpicion

picion of knowing how to make but one uſe of a man.

THESE lights, diffuſed over the fair ſex, will unfold the latent ſeeds of all the virtues. Let not men deceive themſelves with ſome ſuperficial moraliſts, who talk of virtue, in ſuch a manner as if none but idiots could be virtuous. Ignorance produces more vices than the abuſe of knowledge and of the paſſions. To obſerve one's duties, one muſt know them, and be able to diſtinguiſh thoſe that are real, from thoſe which are only nominal: the mind muſt always be impreſſed with ſure principles. Cuſtom may give the appearance of virtue: only ſolid knowledge can give it's reality. Enlightened women will be penetrated with that delightful ſentiment, which ariſes from virtue, and which only can make us happy. They will no longer derive a deſpicable glory from their weakneſſes, from their inconſtancy of taſte, from the levity of their behaviour: in-

ſtead of abandoning themſelves blindly to their paſſions and fancies, they will know how to govern and direct them.

By this merit the ſex will be the pleaſing and uſeful ornament of ſociety, of which it has hitherto been only a dangerous, or at moſt a vain and often inſipid decoration. It's commerce will no longer be the fruitful ſource of frivolouſneſs, and the channel through which it circulates in every ſtate. The men, naturally inclined to court the good graces of the fair, will no longer be obliged to degrade and vilify themſelves in order to pleaſe them. The two ſexes, inſtead of mutually corrupting, will reciprocally enhance the value of each other. What encouragement to merit and talents muſt ariſe from the perſuaſion that beauty will be their reward! What maſter more perſuaſive than a fine mouth, which teaches truth with graces peculiar to itſelf, and leads to virtue by a way ſtrewed with flowers! The eſteem, with which the

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two ſexes will inſpire each other, will be a continual ſchool of urbanity and politeneſs. Women deſtined to be mothers of families, will no longer be the greateſt bar to the education of their children, by their frivolouſneſs, their ignorance, and their irregular conduct: they will no longer ruin families by their whims, their inconſiſtencies, and their extravagant amuſements.

Love will aſſume a new form, that which nature avows, with which ſhe inſpires us to make us happy, and comfort us under the bitterneſs of life. It will not be a groſs inſtinct, which leads to libertiniſm, nor a chimerical idea formed for our torment, nor a wrong turn of the imagination, which dwells only upon the emptineſs of vanity. It will be compoſed of all that can fill delightfully the entire capacity of the ſoul, of all that is moſt delicate in pleaſure; the moſt tender friendſhip, the moſt ſatisfactory confidence, the moſt pleaſing eſteem.

THIS form of love will render the married ſtate more fixed, more honourable, and will conſequently remedy the inconveniencies which ariſe to ſociety from the contempt and inſtability of that ſtate. It is natural to be attached to the object of one's eſteem, and ſuch an attachment cannot be ridiculous. The union of a man of merit with a frivolous being, is always monſtrous, and little durable. Qualities ſo oppoſite, and which the parties concerned hold reciprocally in ſo ſmall eſteem, inſpire only diſguſt; or, if beauty ſnatches ſome tranſient reliſh, it can laſt but a moment. But how delightful is that ſociety, in which every inſtant furniſhes either ſide with new reaſons to commend and rejoice in their choice; in which glory and public approbation ſhine continually upon two fortunate perſons, who have given themſelves to each other for life; in which all their deſires are inceſſantly ſatisfied; and in which the love of diſtinction has nothing

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to ſeek beyond that ſociety? Little will remain for the legiſlator to do, to make marriage conduce to the public good, and to multiply it as population requires.

After having conſidered theſe reciprocal influences of love upon manners, and of manners upon love; it remains to examine, whether this paſſion can be employed as a principal ſpring of legiſlation.

Men love extremes. After long labouring to cry down and ſuppreſs the paſſions, they perceive the fruitleſneſs of their efforts; and to make themſelves amends for that bad ſucceſs, they extol the paſſions too much, and ſubject us abſolutely to their empire. A modern author in particular has diſtinguiſhed himſelf by a panegyric on the paſſions, and by a ſyſtem which makes the moſt material of all paſſions, the phyſical taſte for pleaſure, the principle of every other. It is ſurpriſing to what length the rage of hypotheſis carries ſome people. This author reſembles thoſe naturaliſts,

naturaliſts, who, buſied in ſtudying the properties of the load-ſtone, or of electrical bodies, are ſo full of theſe objects, that they explain all nature by magnetiſm or electricity, and force her many different phenomena to ſquare with a ſingle one. Struck with the extent of phyſical ſenſibility, he miſtakes the other parts of inſtinct, ſo far as to make ambition and avarice depend on the taſte for pleaſure, whilſt thoſe paſſions deny themſelves the enjoyment of any.

Love, which is cloſely connected with that ſenſibility, ought to have a conſiderable ſhare in the hypotheſis of this author. That paſſion is pointed out to us as the ſource of talents, the cauſe of great actions, and we are almoſt told it is a virtue. This paradoxical ſentiment, delivered with a deciſive air, is quite fit to ſpoil young people, who, charmed with an opinion which flatters their inclinations, will imagine, that to acquire merit and talents, they

they need only give themſelves up to all the extravagancies of love; and will take the marks of their weakneſs for proofs of their inſtinct for laudable actions. Experience, when conſulted, does not ſpeak this opinion to be true. Alexander, Euripides, Virgil, Milton, Locke, Newton, Charles XII. Frederic, together with ſo many other great men, and great geniuſes, ſhew us, that ſuperiority is not an effect of the inclination to love. We find, it is true, many men of ſuperior talents addicted to women: but the contrariety of examples demonſtrates at leaſt, that the weakneſſes of love do not neceſſarily produce talents, which doubtleſs depend on the paſſions, but on thoſe of a more exalted kind than love; paſſions, combined with great diverſity, and of which the exiſtence in an individual neither ſuppoſes nor excludes the co-exiſtence of others. Phyſical love ſeems to be the effect of conſtitution and habit: it may be joined to the love of glory, but it is by no means it's ſource.

THIS author contradicts himself. Truth, which never loses her rights, forces him to acknowledge soon after, that great souls have very little feeling for the pleasures of love. And yet none but those high and daring souls attain superior talents, or afford us the enrapturing sight of great actions. It is therefore ridiculous to ascribe an effect to a cause which does not exist in those noble souls. Common souls, (or those which containing a mixture of greatness and littleness, may be ranked after the great) sensible to love, are rather made for agreeable talents, and for a milder, but less sublime virtue. It is the love of glory, the strongest of all passions, the most durable, the most active in all the periods of life, which raises us above mediocrity, and leads to that which is great. The love of women rather removes from it: the effeminacy with which it penetrates the soul, enervates it's strength and activity: the supineness into which it plunges, stints the progress

progreſs of our faculties. It is not without reaſon that ſtateſmen are prejudiced againſt thoſe who are tyranniſed by this paſſion, and think them rendered thereby leſs fit for buſineſs.

Men, it is ſaid, are governed by the hope of pleaſure and the fear of pain. They may conſequently be led to their duty, by ſhewing them a proſpect of the moſt intereſting of pleaſures. Some ſavage nations reward the bravery of their warriors with agreeable drink: the poſſeſſion of a fine woman is ſaid to be at leaſt equal to a draught of liquor. Uncivilized people know only the wants of nature: the ſoul may be ſo benumbed by a habit of pleaſure, as to be rendered inſenſible of more exalted feelings. The example of theſe ſavages, of theſe Beotians, ſo readily cited, proves nothing. The cauſes and their effects ſeem to me to be confounded. It is liberty which gives courage to thoſe nations, and that ſame liberty allows them to purſue the

pleaſures

pleaſures of love with the leſs reſtraint. Even if ſuch a reward can ſtrike vulgar ſouls; how weak is that ſpring of action, in compariſon of the love of glory, and of one's country? The Romans, animated with theſe paſſions, did wonders, whilſt the voluptuous nations remained in a ſtate of mediocrity.

It is eaſy to over-ſtrain the paſſions, ſo as to make them degenerate into fanaticiſm. If the legiſlator makes uſe of love, as a means to inſpire fanaticiſm, that ſpring of action may become dangerous. Fanatical emotions are like ſtrong liquors, which give nature a momentary and ſupernatural ſtrength, and afterwards leave her more depreſſed than before. The followers of religions founded on voluptuouſneſs do for a time ſurpriſing things: but they ſoon fall by ſo much the lower, as their efforts have been great to raiſe themſelves higher. The examples of theſe religions and of chivalry, of which hiſtory ſhews us many diſadvantageous

tageous effects, ought not to prejudice us in favour of the fanaticiſm of love.

To prove to us the neceſſity and the poſſibility of employing this ſpring of action, we are told of ſome legiſlations that have uſed it with ſucceſs. Yet I do not know whether the annals of the world will furniſh us with a ſingle example of that kind. The inſtitutions of Lycurgus, well conſidered, ſeem rather calculated to damp the taſte for pleaſure, than to encourage it. The Lacedemonians are repreſented to us as a voluptuous people, immerſed in effeminacy; whilſt they were, in fact, fierce, ardent for glory, enthuſiaſtically fond of their country. Lycurgus was ſo ſenſible of the rigidity and harſhneſs which his laws imprinted on them, that he made uſe of extraordinary methods to incline them to marriage.

The ſame wrong is done to a modern fanatic, who is accuſed of founding the progreſs of his ridiculous ſect upon the

allurement of the pleaſures of love. The conſtraint of marriages, which ſubjects them to a blind hazard, the diſguſting ceremonies which attend them, the auſterity of manners common to ſectaries, ſeem rather to baniſh love and deſtroy it's pleaſures in thoſe extravagant inſtitutions. His fanaticiſm works only upon diſordered imaginations, and has no other object than the diſtant pleaſures of the life to come.

I CONCLUDE from what I have been ſaying, that it will be difficult for the legiſlation of a poliſhed people to make uſe of love as the ſpring of action: at leaſt it cannot be conſidered as a principal object; eſpecially in a conſtitution, where the received religious notions of the people oppoſe it, and where it would be neceſſary to new-model their manners, in order to introduce it. In the preſent ſtate of things, the legiſlature can only regulate this paſſion, and turn it to the advantage of the manners and morality of the men, by the merit

merit of the women. But an eternal truth, which cannot be ſufficiently inculcated, and which thoſe who are charged with the conduct of men, ought never to loſe ſight of, is, that our paſſions muſt not be put in oppoſition with our duties, nor our pleaſures with the principles of an arbitrary morality: that impotent efforts ought never to be made to ſtop inevitable effects; and that wiſdom conſiſts in leading men in the way traced by nature, and not in forcing them into a tract ſhe knows not of.

THERE is commonly joined to love a compound paſſion, which deſerves attention on account of it's influence on our manners, and of the means by which thoſe manners modify it in their turn. This is, Jealouſy; of which neither the nature, nor the effects are always perceived, and which is looked upon, ſometimes as an innate diſpoſition, ſometimes as a paſſion of our own creating.

THE inſtinct of man for his preſervation attaches him ſtrongly to whatever he thinks good for him. If the poſſeſſion of a woman ſeems to him neceſſary to his happineſs, he will wiſh to poſſeſs her excluſively of all others. The ſpirit of property will produce jealouſy, and this ſentiment is natural. If, in time, the public opinion attaches glory to the conqueſt of a woman, the inſtinct for preference will make us wiſh to enjoy alone a flattering diſtinction on the part of the object beloved: we ſhall be jealous out of vanity. But as the abuſe of theſe two inſtincts makes ſome covetous, and others vainglorious, this ſame abuſe will give different degrees of jealouſy to different characters. There are alſo dark and churliſh men, who, without any pretenſion, without any right, are jealous of all mankind, merely out of averſion to the happineſs of others. It conſequently is ſelf-love, vanity, and envy, which compoſe the eſſence of jealouſy.

ALL men are ſubject to theſe deplorable paſſions. Yet we ſee the effects of jealouſy appear in infinitely different ſhapes among different people, and among the ſame people in different ages. The admirers of phyſical cauſes explain theſe variations by the effects of the climate. The inhabitants of warm countries, ſay they, are greatly addicted to the pleaſures of love, which is their life, their exiſtence: the climate changes, cold countries acquire a greater degree of heat, and their inhabitants become ſubject to the paſſions of hot countries. Men, who feel ſo ſtrongly the neceſſity of loving, muſt look upon love as the greateſt good: they will not be able to bear being deprived of it; they will be jealous.

BY caſting an eye upon the whole extent of the varieties of mankind, one will ſoon perceive the falſity and inſufficiency of theſe principles. The moſt uncomfortable climates of the north produce people

inclined to the pleaſures of love; and whoſe very religion was founded on voluptuouſneſs. We ſee, on the contrary, in the countries of the ſouth, examples of nations of a cold diſpoſition, and of abſtinences which would aſtoniſh the inhabitants of the north. And if a warmer ſun adds vivacity to the paſſions of the inhabitants of thoſe happy regions, the ſame ſun occaſions in them a languor, which hinders them from ſatisfying thoſe paſſions, and renders them at laſt indifferent.

JEALOUSY follows ſtill leſs the order of climates. A ſmall ſpace of only a few miles often ſeparates in Africa nations prone to all the furies of jealouſy, from others which glory in lending their wives to their friends, and even to ſtrangers. The oddeſt, the leaſt jealous cuſtoms, are eſtabliſhed throughout all the Indies: the women there enjoy an entire liberty; they pride themſelves in being looſe; nor is the delicacy of the men at all offended by any

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of their gallantries. Their huſbands even ſeek lovers for them; and their daughters acquire merit by giving proofs of an early fecundity. At Mindanas, the ſovereign thinks himſelf honoured when ſtrangers are fond of his wives. The Guebres, the Armenians, are not jealous in the midſt of a very jealous nation. The inhabitants of Cachemir carry their wives to their princes, that an illuſtrious blood may be put into their families. The Italians are jealous, and their anceſtors were not. Such are the caprices of this paſſion, that, among the moſt jealous nations, a man who would think himſelf diſhonoured by his equals, abandons without remorſe his wife and his daughter to the incontinency of the prieſts.

It is therefore in the moral cauſes, that the reaſons of this diverſity muſt be ſought for. The members of a ſociety, where the ſpirit of property is not fixed, will hardly apply that idea to the poſſeſſion of

women: they will not be jealous; and we know that the ſavages are very little ſo. It was eaſy for Lycurgus, after he had introduced a community of effects, to introduce likewiſe a ſort of community of women. If the government leads to liberty, the women will avail themſelves of the public independence; and the men, unable to poſſeſs themſelves deſpotically of a free being, will be the leſs jealous. The ancient republicans were little tormented with jeaouſy. In countries of ſervitude, on the contrary, where each individual, in imitation of the ſovereign, invades the property of another, the men will be very jealous of their women-ſlaves, and will keep with care the only patrimony of which they can diſpoſe. This effect will be ſo much the more certain, if polygamy be joined to deſpotiſm: a debtor unable to pay, endeavours to ſcreen himſelf from his creditors.

If vanity be mixed with the compoſition

of

of love, jealouſy will aſſume different forms, and have different degrees of ſtrength, in proportion to the ſublimity of the idea which a nation attaches to love. A grandee of a deſpotic country, accuſtomed to ſee none but ſlaves who truckle at his feet, will require the heart of his wife to be alſo his ſlave, and will not brook its feeling the leaſt emotion that is not directed towards him, who thinks himſelf ſo far above all other beings. A Spaniard, full of romantic dreams; an Italian, enthuſiaſtically enraptured with platonic chimeras; places his whole happineſs in the poſſeſſion of a woman, and will not be able to bear the loſs of her, without feeling all the rage of an irritated paſſion. Our good fore-fathers, in the fanatical times of knight-errantry, and in thoſe which continued to retain it's ſpirit, could not, without indignation, ſee their divinities degraded and profaned.

But if the manners grow corrupt; if love

love is only a depravity of the imagination, which aims at nothing more than multiplying ſhameful conqueſts; if the women draw upon themſelves the contempt of men of underſtanding; if by their conduct, and the tacit acknowledgment of the public, they are deemed almoſt common; jealouſy will be baniſhed. Diſcernment cannot prize that which is deſpicable, nor obſtinately perſiſt in ſtriving to confine a thing, which, by its nature, gets looſe every moment. Jealouſy becomes ridiculous, a wrong turn of the mind, a weakneſs. It is the proof either of imbecility, or of bad taſte, or of an unhappy temper, at enmity with men, and ready to diſturb their pleaſures.

THIS paſſion is conſequently regulated and modified by our manners, our education, and our prejudices. But, if it depends on theſe cauſes, it influences in its turn the manners and the happineſs of a nation. Too much of it, and none at all, are equally hurtful to ſociety.

A NATION prone to great jealouſy, will be of a gloomy, harſh, and cruel diſpoſition: it's manners will ſavour of the reſtraint in which the women are kept. Theſe laſt, in ſuch a nation, will be ſhut up and ſeparated from the commerce of the men, who will be unwilling to expoſe weak beings to continual temptations, and to run the hazard of loſing them, for want of taking care to keep them. This fear is founded: a prejudice, that enlightened women are inclined to make a wrong uſe of their advantages, cauſes their education to be neglected, and that bad education adds to the natural weakneſs of their ſex. The men will be deprived of the ſweets of the commerce of women: they will neither hazard the dangers which attend it, nor ſeek to be connected with perſons of little merit. They will be ſtrangers to the graces, the ſweetneſs, which that commerce inſpires: they will be ignorant of that politeneſs, which a proper

proper deſire of pleaſing gives reciprocally to both ſexes, and of that communication of knowledge which ſociety may occaſion. If again, a chimerical notion of honour be joined to jealouſy, horrid acts of vengeance will be employed to vindicate that offended honour. The nation will take a moroſe, ſuſpicious, and revengeful turn: that defect alone may plunge it into a kind of barbariſm.

If, on the contrary, the manners of a nation are ſo corrupt as to baniſh entirely all jealouſy, the want of that paſſion will add continually to the depravity of thoſe manners. Shame will not be reſiſted: little value will be ſet upon a treaſure which it is ridiculous to keep. The women, of whom the poſſeſſion becomes a matter of indifference, will fall into abjection; and the perſons beloved will no longer be to each other any thing more than ſtrangers, ready to part every moment. There will no longer be either confidence,

confidence, attachment, or eſteem: conſequently the fruits of all connection between two perſons of merit will be loſt. The married, aſhamed of a poſſeſſion of which they are not to cheriſh the property, will endeavour to abſent themſelves from it, in order to be faſhionable: marriages will be diſſolved as ſoon as formed; and ſociety will be fruſtrated of all the advantages which might have been expected from well regulated love.

THE ſame difficulties, and the ſame remedies, which we have found occur in regard to love, offer to the legiſlator, who would moderate jealouſy according to the intereſts of ſociety. But as jealouſy depends entirely on our education and manners, it will be more amenable than love to the arrangements of the legiſlation. In our modern governments, the merit of the education of the women will nearly determine what plan, beſt ſuited to the welfare of ſociety, and moſt conſiſtent with nature,

nature, the regulating of this paſſion may admit of. All will go right, if, to uſe the expreſſion of an illuſtrious author, mankind will but be ſatisfied, that women are the delight of ſociety, when they reſerve themſelves for the pleaſures of only one.

If the empire of truth over our happineſs is ever manifeſted clearly, it is in what concerns the œconomy of theſe two paſſions. By diſcovering their nature, by appreciating them according to their juſt value, we ſhall not vilify ourſelves by a brutal debauchery; we ſhall not fall into a ſhameful ſlavery; we ſhall avoid ridicules, which degrade our characters and our talents: we ſhall find in ſuitable connections an inexhauſtible ſource of pleaſure, and of means to perfect the moſt eſtimable qualities: in ſhort, we ſhall learn not to make to ourſelves a torment of a paſſion, which is given us for our happineſs.

ESSAY IV.

ESSAY IV.

OF

COMMERCE

AND

LUXURY.

Quid leges ſine moribus
Vanæ proficiunt? ſi neque fervidis
Pars incluſa caloribus
Mundi, nec Boreæ finitimum latus
Duratæque ſolo nives
Mercatorem abigunt?

HORAT. L. III. Od. XXIV.

OF COMMERCE AND LUXURY.

ALL objects relative to commerce are now looked upon as the moſt intereſting. One might, perhaps not improperly, call this, the trading age, to diſtinguiſh it from former ages: for certainly the ſpirit of traffic never poſſeſſed all nations, at any period of time, more ſtrongly than at preſent.

OUR politicians place the happineſs of a people in the flouriſhing ſtate of their trade. It conſequently is not to be won-

dered at, if the public affairs are combined upon that principle; if treaties of peace degenerate into treatiſes of commerce, and if trade be alſo the object of our wars. Nations endeavour reciprocally to incroach upon advantages, real or imaginary, enjoyed by their neighbours. Sovereigns favour that which they think calculated to increaſe their power: political writers inſtruct their fellow citizens in the knowledge of things which are deemed the ſource of public felicity.

MAY one dare to queſtion the validity of this great number of unanimous ſuffrages? May one venture to examine whether this utility of an extenſive commerce be real; whether it be not founded on prejudice; and whether the ſuppoſed advantages of an over-grown trade do not bring on inconveniencies which exceed their benefits?

A SENSIBLE man propoſes theſe two political problems: how far is it conſiſtent with

with the intereſt of a ſtate to favour luxury, and commerce? How can the military ſpirit of a people, and the ſpirit of trade, be preſerved at the ſame time? It would be preſumptuous to promiſe a perfect ſolution of problems ſo extenſive and ſo complicated. But, if the direct ſolution of them is too difficult, one may at leaſt be permitted to try the method of approximation, to furniſh ſome *data*, and to render the ſubject eaſier to a more able hand.

We have ſeveral books upon trade; many of them ſo well written, that it would be needleſs for me here to enter into the detail of it's nature and diverſity. I may pre-ſuppoſe the lights which thoſe authors have ſpread among us, and ſet out from the point where they have ſtopped. The diſtinction is known, between an œconomical trade and a trade of luxury, which laſt might, perhaps more properly, have been called, general trade; the word luxury conveying a diſadvantageous idea of a trade,

which leads ſometimes only to expence, or to a very innocent indulgence.

It is neceſſity which forces a people to carry on an œconomical trade. Inhabiting a ſmall and barren country, or ſeeking in a maritime town an aſylum from oppreſſion, that people cannot provide for their wants, but by becoming the factors of neighbouring nations. The freedom neceſſarily requiſite for the formation of theſe indigent ſtates, draws to them continually new citizens, and, by increaſing the number of the people, increaſes their wants, and conſequently their trade. The antients knew ſcarce any trade but this œconomical one: and the nature of this traffic, managed by ſmall ſtates and effeminated men, is, I think, the chief cauſe of the contempt with which the Roman pride loaded trade in general.

But if neceſſity rears this edifice, it cannot give it ſolidity. Nothing is more frail than the foundation on which it reſts; the

the ignorance and idleneſs of the neighbouring nations. Theſe nations need only ſee their true intereſt, and carry on their trade themſelves, at once to ruin the people who ſubſiſt by an œconomical trade. In the preſent poſition of affairs, it is hardly probable that any nation will arrive at the glory of ſerving Europe in quality of univerſal factor: it will rather happen, that a people who have hitherto carried on a vaſt œconomical trade, will be confined to their own marſhes. To be maſters of this kind of traffic for the future, will require a ſuperior power, able to force it's neighbours to dependance.

The legiſlator has little power over a being which neceſſity creates, and neceſſity deſtroys. Oeconomical trade does not come within the caſe we are going to conſider, 'till, by it's extent and duration, it has accumulated the ſigns of riches, to ſuch a degree as to produce the ſame inconveniencies, as every other trade extended beyond it's proper limits.

THE diviſion of general commerce, into home and foreign trade, is a ſubject of which the examination may afford greater utility. To diſcover the advantages of theſe two branches, it will not be improper to follow their natural progreſſion.

SUPPOSING, which has always been the caſe, that a number of diſperſed people unite, and form a ſociety: theſe people, ſavages or barbarians, will content themſelves at firſt with the means which nature offers them, to ſatisfy their wants: they will be hunters. Without fatal accidents, which ſtop population, men multiply; and hunting will ſoon be inſufficient; for theſe people becoming more numerous, they will acquire a knowledge of animals, and of the reſources that may be derived from thoſe of the tamer kind: they will become ſhepherds.

INCREASING in number, they will find that their fields do not naturally yield ſufficient paſture for their neceſſary flocks and herds,

herds, nor conſequently thoſe flocks and herds food enough for their multiplied ſociety. Advancing at the ſame time in knowledge, they will diſcover the means of drawing ſubſiſtence from the earth: they will become huſbandmen.

If the progreſs of their multiplication be not interrupted: if theſe people, by degrees, rub off the ruſt of ignorance; it then is natural for the individuals among them, either ſtinted in their portion of land, through that inequality of fortune which takes place at the very firſt, or prompted to induſtry by a mechanical inſtinct, or ſtruck with the diſcovery of new wants, to manufacture the materials which their cattle, and the culture of their land afford them: the arts ſpring up on every ſide. The huſbandman, tempted by the conveniencies which induſtry offers him, barters his ſuperfluous commodities for the productions of art: theſe conveniencies, becoming known, encourage

greater numbers to dig into the earth, in order to draw from thence commodities of the firſt neceſſity; and the aſſurance of gaining a ſufficient livelihood induces a part of the people to apply themſelves to induſtry. Exchanges will be made, either in kind, or by ſuch repreſentative ſign as ſhall be agreed upon. A home trade is eſtabliſhed, and this trade produces a great population.

KNOWLEDGE being multiplied, and the new wants felt, theſe people diſcover new productions of art and of nature, which a different climate, and a varied induſtry, render peculiar to other countries. This diſcovery ſets them upon acquiring theſe foreign productions, by bartering for them ſuperfluities of their own, which their neighbours have not. This is the origin of foreign trade, which, by introducing new commodities, and ridding a country of it's ſuperfluities, affords ſubſiſtence to a greater number of inhabitants.

It will ſoon happen, that exchange can no longer be made in kind. Recourſe muſt then be had to the univerſal ſigns of value, adopted by all nations, as they have grown civilized and poliſhed; gold and ſilver will be thoſe repreſentatives. If the balance of trade is in favour of a people, if their exports exceed their imports; theſe ſigns, to which the idea of wealth is annexed, will multiply with that people, who will be rich, according to the vulgar opinion, and who may be really ſo by the increaſe of their commodities and labour. But by a too great abundance of theſe ſigns, too conſiderable a portion of their maſs is made to anſwer to the value of commodities: labour becomes dear: the rich people can no longer ſuſtain the competition of poorer nations, and their very riches ruin their trade.

This too great maſs of the ſigns of value produces another effect. It contributes extremely to the diſproportion of fortunes;

an inequality which ſtints population; which prompts men to make improper uſes of their riches, and conſequently to abandon themſelves to luxury. A nation which ſatisfies it's wants with only part of it's maſs of ſigns, employs the ſurplus in indulging fancies.

At the ſame time that this inequality of fortunes affords eaſe to numbers, without ſubjecting them to labour, and plunges them into idleneſs; well-turned minds employ their leiſure in acquiring uſeful or agreeable talents. The communication of knowledge, occaſioned by trade, the diſcovery of countries where nature is varied, the obſerving of the different laws and manners of various nations, the wants of the arts and of navigation, all, in ſhort, contributes to baniſh barbariſm, and enlarge the ſphere of knowledge. Politeneſs, the fine arts, the ſciences, ſpring up ſometimes in the boſom of riches, but are not always the fruit of them.

By examining the progreſs of commerce, we ſee the clue that leads out of the labyrinth, in which moſt writers, who have attempted to determine the utility or dangers of an extenſive trade, have loſt themſelves. Let us conſider more particularly it's advantages and diſadvantages, and then judge from facts.

To prove the neceſſity and the uſefulneſs of commerce, may be thought a repetition of what is already well known. There are, however, friends to barbariſm, lovers of paradoxes, who, for our comfort, would perſuade us, that we are undone by eaſe, and rendered miſerable by the arts and ſciences. Some bid us make ourſelves happy by returning to a paſtoral life. Others, immerſed in the pleaſures of a great city, adviſe us to renounce the world, to bury ourſelves in the gloomy foreſts of Canada, to ſeparate ourſelves from ſociety, to wander with the Tartars in the boundleſs plains of Upper Aſia.

It cannot be denied, but that we might be content with a much more ſimple way of life, than that which has been introduced in our days. It would, however, be miſtaking man, to imagine the felicity of a civilized people leſs great than that of barbarians. The Creator has implanted in man an inſtinct of curioſity, which irreſiſtibly impels him to ſeek new knowledge, and make new diſcoveries. We are happy, only ſo far as we follow faithfully our inſtinct; and we are unhappy, only by neglecting, or miſinterpreting, that inward voice, which ſpeaks to us without ceaſing. It would even be impoſſible for us to return to a ſimple way of life; cuſtom, another powerful inſtinct, ſoon rendering neceſſary, that which was at firſt only convenient. It is plain then, that we are happier in enjoying many ſweets unknown to our anceſtors, and the inchanting ſight which the numberleſs productions of all ſorts of arts afford us. It is to commerce that we owe theſe advantages.

THE influence of trade extends ſtill farther. It has been ſaid *, that a people, who do not underſtand aſtronomy, cannot make a piece of cloth of a certain degree of beauty: a ſaying full of meaning, and of which the inverted ſenſe will hold equally good; namely, that aſtronomy will make but a poor figure in a country, where the people do not know how to make cloth in perfection. All holds together; and the progreſs of the human mind requires a gradation from the ſimple to the compound. A neglect of the mechanic arts would be an omen far from favourable to the fine arts and the ſciences. A mechanical invention is often the origin of the moſt ſublime diſcoveries; and the detail of the arts muſt have preceded and formed the principles of the moſt exalted truths. The ſuavity of manners too which commerce inſpires, the tranquility it occaſions, and the facility of inſtruction which it procures,

* See Hume's Eſſays.

procures, incline men to apply themſelves to peaceful occupations, and to the culture of the mind. Commerce conſequently contributes to the progreſs of the ſciences and fine arts.

THESE advantages do not depend on a trade's being enormouſly extenſive. They might ſubſiſt even with only a home trade. Antient hiſtory ſhews us nations, who, though ſeparated from their neighbours, and without foreign trade, were powerful and happy, ſolely by induſtry, by the culture of their lands and of the arts, and by an animated circulation of their own productions. Japan is now an indiſputable proof of this truth.

BUT this home trade alone is not always ſufficient for ſtates connected by reciprocally dubious ties, and which have continually intereſts to diſcuſs. A foreign trade, extended over the whole world, promiſes thoſe ſtates an advantage, which ſeems particularly to ſtrike our modern politicians,

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and to prejudice them in favour of trade in general. Men are tacitly agreed, and with ſome reaſon, to make riches conſiſt in the poſſeſſion of gold and ſilver. If a people do not poſſeſs, within their own territories, mines, from whence the materials of theſe conventional ſigns are drawn, the only way they have to procure them, is, to force them from their neighbours, by an extenſive commerce.

The poſſeſſion of theſe ſigns is become abſolutely neceſſary, and real riches are rendered inſufficient. The intereſts of nations, perpetually confuſed by the number of fruitleſs treaties, no longer admit of any deciſion but that of arms. Theſe almoſt inceſſant wars are made either upon the frontiers, or in foreign countries, where the troops muſt march money in hand. They even become deſtructive of money, by the manner in which they are carried on. The contagious cuſtom of keeping in time of peace, as well as in open war, a

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diſproportioned number of mercenary and idle troops, the immenſe quantities of all ſorts of ſtores and ammunition, the coſtly perfection of a marine, the rage of beſieging, the uſeleſs multiplication of fortified places, the luxury of officers, all theſe objects require an enormous expence. Not content with laviſhing their gold for their own armaments, or with fighting with their own forces, potentates now embark their neighbours in quarrels foreign to them: allies are bought: ſubſidies are paid. In ſhort, if the maxim, that money is the ſinew of war, was ever verified, it is now. Trade, which alone furniſhes that ſinew, is deemed the ſtrength and ſecurity of nations.

But it ſeems to contribute in a ſtill more effectual manner to the power of ſtates. The exportation of the fruits of induſtry of a country brings to that country, in return, the products of another, or ſigns of value with which thoſe products are

are purchaſed. A trading country has therefore the more means of ſubſiſting a greater number of inhabitants, in proportion to the extent and produce of it's lands. This facility of ſubſiſtence increaſes population. It is a known truth, that the real ſtrength of a nation conſiſts in the number, eaſe, and induſtry of it's inhabitants.

THESE are the uſeful and advantageous effects aſcribed to trade. Let us ſee whether this utility be ſufficiently great and certain, to induce greedy nations to uſurp the rights of humanity, by monopolizing univerſal trade: and whether that blind greedineſs does not carry with it it's own puniſhment, by becoming the ſource of the deſtruction of an unjuſt people.

So long as trade does not exceed the bounds preſcribed by nature, it renders a people happy by it's advantageous conſequences. But when it goes beyond thoſe bounds, it makes a nation know new wants, and incites her to gratify them. Men grow

tired of real conveniencies, and ſeek for ſuperfluities. The irritated fancy will be no longer curbed; it runs rapidly after refinements, and the number of makers of ſuperfluities furniſh the means of gratifying this irregular deſire. It is the nature of the paſſions, and of curioſity, not to ſtop till they meet with ſome inſuperable obſtacle. This impulſe, once given to the fancies of the people, precipitates a nation into luxury. The effects of luxury and of riches are ſo cloſely connected, that it is neceſſary to conſider them together.

Lord Bacon, ſpeaking of the viciſſitudes of human knowledge in regard to the conſtitution of ſtates, obſerves, that men apply themſelves to the ſciences and fine arts in their flower of life, and to the mechanic arts and trade, when their faculties begin to decline. This order ſeems to overturn that which we found in following the joint progreſſion of ſociety and knowledge. Yet Bacon's order is founded in reality, and

nations,

nations, as well as men, are liable to a ſecond childhood.

If a moderate trade preſerves a people in the vigour of manhood, too vaſt a trade haſtens on it's old age. Cupidity, ſtimulated by the fortunes made in trade, ſeizes the minds of all. Intereſt, the only idol of a trading nation, baniſhes virtue and talents. The deſire of glory gives way to the thirſt for gold. How can a man, formed by nature for that which is truly great, ſubmit to the fatigue of cultivating her precious gifts, when he ſees that incenſe is offered only to heaps of gold, and that he may aſpire to diſtinction with little talents and leſs labour? If the ſpirit and ardour of trade poſſeſs the maſs of a nation; enlightened knowledge, virtue, and talents diſappear. The love of riches and the deſire of glory, have been, and will be, always incompatible.

Do the annals of the world afford us a ſingle inſtance of a rich people, plunged in

luxury, or wholly intent upon trade, that ever diſtinguiſhed themſelves by their knowledge or actions? Antient Perſia, the country the moſt famous for it's luxury and riches, did not produce one man, whom hiſtory has thought worth recording. The opulent city of Tyre contained only traders, and no great men. The Carthaginians were a barbarous, daſtardly, cruel, and perfidious people, contemners and perſecutors of merit. The illuſtrious among the Alexandrians were all foreigners: their natives, abſorbed in trade, knew nothing but money. One aſtronomer excepted, the rich Marſeilles did not ſee the name of any of her citizens tranſmitted to poſterity.

But what numbers of great men have ſprung up in the midſt of poverty, in countries ignorant of trade, or which traded but very little! Antient Greece, a barren land, neither rich nor trading, produced alone more illuſtrious men than the reſt of the known world. Among the ſtates which compoſed

compoſed that happy country, was not the poor, the frugal Sparta, the rival of Athens in politeneſs and knowledge, and her ſuperior in virtue and merit? The epoch of the fine ages, which are the glory of humanity, does not fall in the time of the higheſt degree of the luxury and riches of the nations which had the happineſs of ſeeing thoſe ages. They follow times of trouble, ferments, and civil wars, in which perſonal merit, ſolely eſteemed, fires the mind; but in which languiſhing commerce could not ſeduce by the alluring proſpect of gain.

To apreciate nations now exiſting, is odious. But let an impartial reader run over the preſent ſtate of Europe; let him look for the native countries of the great men; let him diſcover the abode of knowledge, and let him judge from facts, whether the ſpirit of trade and it's extenſion be favourable to the ſciences, to virtue, and to talents. A ſingle nation is an exception

to this rule: but that nation owes this advantage to the ſingularity of it's conſtitution, which mitigates hitherto the bad effects of a vaſt commerce, and which will not mitigate them long.

The increaſe of population, which is looked upon as a conſequence of every kind of trade, is in fact a benefit which ariſes only from a moderate commerce. Too extenſive a one is deſtructive of the human ſpecies. One muſt be little acquainted with the principles of ſound policy, not to know, that the only ſolid foundation of a numerous population, is agriculture. Without this, the ſubſiſtence of a people is precarious, and depends on the uncertain viciſſitude of harveſts, or the arbitrary aſſiſtance of neighbours. Uncertainty of ſubſiſtence hinders people from marrying, and even induces them to leave their native country. The claſs of huſbandmen, who exerciſe the ſureſt traffic, and whoſe children are their riches, is, of all others,

others, the fitteſt and moſt inclined to multiply. Now too great a commerce diminiſhes agriculture, depopulates the country, and annihilates by degrees the claſs of huſbandmen. The indolence and avidity of men tempt them to quit a laborious occupation, for one which is more tranquil and more lucrative, though leſs certain. The eaſe in which the artificers of luxury live, ſeduces the indigent peaſant, draws him to the principal cities, and the country is deſerted.

Too extenſive a trade is likewiſe productive of other cauſes of deſtruction to the human ſpecies. It renders long voyages neceſſary, often to climates which do not agree with the conſtitution of the navigator, and which deſtroy numbers of thoſe who undertake them. It occaſions the ſettling of colonies in diſtant countries, where the colonized periſh: colonies, which exhauſt their mother country in every ſhape, without being of any other

uſe, than furniſhing her with ſuperfluities, which ſhe could do without. Even in that mother country, the great number of workmen employed in ſuperfluities never enjoy a ſure ſubſiſtence. A branch of trade is loſt, a manufacture grows out of faſhion, or is forbidden in other countries; and all that were employed in it, not being able to get other work immediately, are reduced to diſtreſs. It is well known what miſery ſuch changes cauſe in our trading towns. What is proved at leaſt by experience, is that the claſs of artiſans diminiſhes inceſſantly, and that it is ſupported only by continual recruits, taken from the claſs of huſbandmen.

It is odd, that trade ſhould be deemed the ſource of great population, whilſt the richeſt countries in Europe grow viſibly depopulated. This is demonſtratively evident in regard to Portugal, Spain, and France. The Engliſh, by comparing their preſent ſtate with that it was in the fifteenth

fifteenth century, will experience the ſame truth. Several reaſons might be aſſigned for this event: but depopulation follows too regularly the progreſs of trade, and the increaſe of riches, not to ſhew the connection between the cauſe and the effect. The trading countries which ſtill preſerve themſelves beſt, repair their loſſes only by an inundation of foreigners, who flock to the ſpring of riches to quench their thirſt of gold. It may, however, be greatly queſtioned, whether the happineſs of a ſtate does not require, that it's inhabitants ſhould be fixed at home by a flouriſhing huſbandry, rather than to receive into it's boſom mercenary ſtrangers.

We come now to the examination of the laſt advantage, the tinſel glittering of which dazzles the eyes of ſtateſmen, as well as of others; this is, the increaſe of riches, or rather of the ſigns of riches, which a foreign and extenſive trade naturally produces. But how deceitful is the

appearance

appearance of health, which this augmentation gives to a ſtate! We ſhall find this ſeeming plumpneſs to be only a bloatedneſs, which, far from ſpeaking health, is a ſure indication of a mortal diſorder.

It is certain that theſe ſigns of riches, accumulated by a lucrative commerce, enable a ſovereign to make war with ſuperiority in the territories of his neighbours. It may even be allowed that war requires only money, till ſuch time as a poor and brave people prove to effeminated nations, that victory depends on men, and not on gold. One may alſo approve of the ruinous policy of buying inconſtant friendſhip, and loſing one's money by paying ſubſidies.

But how much were it to be wiſhed, for the happineſs of ſovereigns and of their people, that trade ſhould not contribute to the fatal facility of multiplying and perpetuating uſeleſs and deſtructive wars! The political ſyſtem of Europe, founded partly on ſpecious prejudices, which ſerve

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to gloſs over an ill-judged ambition, makes it's ſovereigns interfere in all quarrels, under pretence of maintaining the general equilibrium. The ſword is often drawn for equivocal intereſts of a branch of commerce, which ought rather to be abandoned to nations blind enough to run after their own ruin. After much bloodſhed, and great expence, the intereſts of the belligerant parties are as little ſettled as before. A forced peace is made, becauſe all ſides are weary, and laſts, till another war begins. The ballance is then like that of an empty pair of ſcales.

If freſh ſupplies of the ſigns of riches did not furniſh inceſſantly new food to this miſguided ambition, mankind might hope for a little more repoſe. The maſters of the world would be forced to practiſe the maxims of a beneficent policy, by which they would find, that the power of a ſovereign conſiſts in the number and eaſe of his ſubjects; that the productions of

of the earth and of induſtry are the only real riches; that there are no ſolid conqueſts, but thoſe which are gained over nature and art in one's own country; and that even the ſafety of a ſtate is ſufficiently ſecured by a number of inhabitants inured to laborious occupations.

THIS abundance of riches and of their ſigns increaſes ſtill farther the deſtructive manner in which wars are carried on. One would think that nations had agreed, not only to ſtake their revenues at this game of chance; but to play at once for the whole value of their ſtates. The dangerous credit of a rich people facilitates to them the means of borrowing more than they can pay. The debts of the moſt powerful nations are ſo diſproportioned to the reality of their funds, that they will, at laſt, be reduced to the neceſſity, either of clearing themſelves by violent means, by revolutions like the Saturnalia of the antients, or be forced to ſink beneath the heavy

heavy load. Poor nations have not credit enough to ruin themſelves by borrowing: conſequently they will acquire ſtrength inſenſibly, whilſt the rich will fall into a lingering conſumption. A greater difficulty to contract public debts, would perhaps bring back the times when the ſacrifice of a ſmall number of citizens decided all quarrels; when little armies did great things; and when great generals, commanding leſs numerous bodies, had more ample means to diſplay the ſuperiority of their talents.

If an abundance of the ſigns of riches be not ſo advantageous as is generally thought, in regard to the foreign concerns of a ſtate; it is ſtill much leſs favourable to it's intereſt at home. In following the progreſſive ſteps of trade, we have ſeen, that a redundance of the ſigns of riches raiſes the price of workmanſhip, and cramps all competition at foreign markets. Since the real riches of a ſtate conſiſt only

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in the productions of the earth and of induſtry, it would be indifferent, what maſs of the ſigns of value anſwered to the maſs of thoſe productions. But general experience places ſome difference therein. It is obſerved, that the price of the neceſſaries of life does not riſe in proportion to the augmentation of the ſigns of value. The caſe is not the ſame with reſpect to workmanſhip, which riſes more rapidly. It is well known, that in Spain, ſince the working of the mines of the Indies, a workman earns in two days enough to ſupport him a whole week. If thoſe two days ſuffice, the natural indolence of the people will make that workman remain idle the reſt of the time. The ſuperabundance of the maſs of gold and ſilver is then the real cauſe of the languiſhing ſtate of that kingdom.

Soon or late, the ſame thing happens in all countries. Workmanſhip being thus dear, the price of all productions will become

come ſo conſiderable, that the rich nation will no longer be able to find a vent for them among the people who are poorer, and theſe laſt will be obliged to exert their own induſtry. The rich people will even find their account in buying cheap of the poor. But if they buy more than they ſell, the ſigns will ſoon follow their natural courſe, and paſs into the hands of the poor nation. The faculty of buying cheaper than their own productions coſt them, will make the rich people neglect their induſtry: they will become poor in their turn. Such is the fatal circle which all commercial ſtates have run through, as hiſtory teſtifies; and which they muſt of neceſſity go through.

This inconvenience is compenſated, we are told, by the riſe of the value of land and other immoveables, and by a more rapid circulation of money, the uſual conſequences of an increaſe of the ſigns of riches. But the real value of land is only

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in proportion to the commodities it produces. If I pay an hundred yellow ſigns for a piece of ground, which was formerly valued at only an hundred white ſigns, and if that ground does not yield me a greater quantity of commodities, I do not ſee that it has riſen in value. Am I better lodged in a houſe reckoned worth a thouſand yellow ſigns, than I was in that ſame houſe when it was valued at only a thouſand white ſigns? This pretended riſe of the value of land is then a merely ideal calculation, fit only to figure in a rent-roll. It is juſt as if a Swede ſhould think himſelf richer than an Engliſhman, becauſe a payment made to the former is brought in a cart, and the latter may receive the ſame ſum out of a purſe which the debtor carries in his pocket.

It is as difficult to conceive how the abundance of ſigns can increaſe circulation. Nothing is more pleaſant than the efforts of political calculators, to explain and

and eſtimate the benefit of this circulation of money. They make of it a kind of magic, and metamorphoſe into real gain, a ſimple exchange from hand to hand; a gain which the nation is to make upon herſelf by this miraculous operation. It is juſt as if I ſhould reckon my money regularly every month, and imagine myſelf for that reaſon twelve times richer at the end of the year, than I was at the beginning of it. Circulation is founded, only on the frequent return of the home exchanges of the productions of the earth and of induſtry. It's whole advantage conſequently conſiſts in the proof, that all labour, and that all live. It is labour which gives an impulſe to the ſigns, and never the ſigns which give motion to labour. The ſtate of Spain is a deciſive example of this: and if countries poor of money languiſh, induſtry does not periſh for want of ſigns; but thoſe ſigns are not attracted, through want of induſtry. If exchanges are but

multiplied, all is animated; let the ſigns of thoſe exchanges be gold or paper.

THIS thought reminds me of a fanatical cuſtom, which has been introduced in Europe: I mean, that of paper credit. People already oppreſſed by too great a maſs of the ſigns of metal, load themſelves with ſtill another, the moſt fictitious of all ſigns, and which may be multiplied arbitrarily to infinity. Bodies rendered lethargic by a too great quantity of blood, increaſe the bulk of that blood, to complete the obſtruction of the veſſels. The effect of this practice will be no other, than to precipitate with violence all the diſadvantageous conſequences of a ſuperabundance of the ſigns of metal. Paper is fit only for bankers, whoſe buſineſs is to facilitate payments, and to ſave the carriage of money, Every other uſe that is made of paper, is hurtful. It is dealing in Sibylline leaves.

WE are yet to conſider the laſt and moſt dangerous

dangerous effect of the increaſe of riches and of their ſigns: that is, the introduction of luxury. This ſubject is ſo important, and at the ſame time ſo little cleared up, that it deſerves to be treated ſomewhat fully.

LUXURY, a vague word, an undetermined being, has had the fate of all terms, of which the ſignification is not fixed. It is blamed by ſome, and praiſed by others, according to the idea they attach to the term, and according to the light in which they ſee it.

THE moraliſts, accuſtomed to repeat without examination the deciſions of their gloomy predeceſſors, rail at all luxury and expence, without exception. Seeing the epoch of expence and that of the culture of the mind coincide nearly with that of luxury, ſome extend the anathema to politeneſs, the ſciences, and the arts. On the other hand, the panegyriſts of luxury, by confounding it with expence, polite-

neſs, and the flouriſhing ſtate of the arts and ſciences, hold it to be uſeful and neceſſary.

It has been rightly ſaid, that the rich man ought to ſpend, and that the public good requires his making uſe of his wealth: but a well regulated expence, though great, is not luxury. Luxury is the abuſe of riches: it conſiſts in an extravagance for fantaſtical ſuperfluities, diſproportioned to the ſituation and abilities of him that ſpends. Proceeding from this idea, it will not be difficult, I believe, to trace the birth of luxury, it's characters, and it's effects.

If a vaſt trade, or any other cauſe, accumulates conſiderably riches or their ſigns, thoſe riches cannot be equally diſtributed. The cupidity of man prompts him to amaſs, to invade the property of his fellow-citizens. A great commerce, and an abundance of the ſigns of wealth, afford all the means of heaping up endleſs riches. Ex-

pences

pences will be in proportion to this inequality of fortunes. But real wants are eaſily ſatisfied: conveniencies do not require enormous charges: even magnificence has it's bounds. The poſſeſſor of a prodigious heap of riches, being no longer able to make a natural uſe of them, will abuſe them. To enjoy them, he will be forced to frame to himſelf imaginary wants. Man, once abandoned to his little paſſions, never ſtops half way: one fancy begets another, and every ſuperfluity that can be thought of will, in it's turn, be the object of thoſe fancies. Fancies are contagious: the example of the rich will ſeduce all the claſſes of a people. Each will endeavour to imitate the expence of a higher claſs: a general miſuſe will be made of riches: men will ſpend more than they can afford, upon fantaſtical ſuperfluities; and luxury will become general.

LUXURY conſequently owes it's origin to the too great inequality of fortunes,

introduced by the ſuperabundance of the ſigns of riches. It is plain, that luxury will ſooner and more eaſily take place in monarchies, than in republics. In the monarchical government, the conſtitution requires a diſtinction of conditions, and the keeping up of certain families. It's laws, by making inheritances deſcend to only one perſon, contribute to the inequality of fortunes; and the ſight of the pomp which ſurrounds the prince, is an incitement to a too great expence. Republics aim more at equality: they require ſimpler manners: even their laws, if they are agreeable to the conſtitution, favour the diviſion of fortunes.

THERE are poor countries, whoſe conduct reminds one of the fable of the ox and the frog. Placed unfortunately between rich countries, whoſe dazzling expence tempts them, they endeavour to imitate them in little. This luxury is an expence above their condition and abilities: they dare

dare not arrive at even the frivolous glory of fancies. But theſe countries will return to their natural poſition, when the feeble ſources, which ſupport a momentary flaſh, ſhall be exhauſted. All that will remain to them of their borrowed ſplendor, will be the inconvenience of the high price of neceſſaries, and the inability to ſatisfy the deſire of a little ſuperfluity, which the paſt will have changed into want.

Let us conſider the effects of luxury, of which we have ſeen the birth. This viper ſoon deſtroys the mother that gave it life. The abuſe of riches is the cauſe of their being miſplaced. Unthinking people, whoſe affairs are already diſordered by their too great expence, enrich the claſs of thoſe who furniſh the aliments of luxury. The ſinking of one claſs and the riſing of another, would be a matter of indifference, if the riches went to the induſtrious claſs, the laſt and moſt important of all the claſſes: but they are gained by the artificers of

luxury, who ſoon fall into luxury themſelves, and are ruined in their turn. Fancies then are no longer ſatisfied with the produce of national induſtry: curioſity and fickleneſs long for far-fetched foreign fruits. The workman of luxury, ſpending more, and labouring leſs, is no longer able to compete with the workman of a poorer and more frugal nation. The people given to luxury will buy much and ſell little: their riches will paſs into the hands of their neighbours.

If luxury deſtroys the fictitious riches, it ſtill more certainly deſtroys the real riches of a ſtate, population, huſbandry, and the moſt neceſſary induſtry. All the conſequences dangerous to theſe real riches, which we have diſcovered in a vaſt trade, flow likewiſe from the luxury which trade produces.

But whatever be the origin of luxury, ſuppoſing it to owe it's birth to great conqueſts, it contains equally in it's boſom

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ſeeds deſtructive to population. All the inſtruments of luxury are formed at the expence of the multiplication of the ſpecies. Luxury keeps, at a vaſt charge, an immoderate number of uſeleſs domeſtics, who are hindered from marrying; the maintenance of theſe idle ſlaves, their propagation interrupted, their idleneſs encouraged; all theſe articles are real loſſes to the ſtate. This multitude is taken from the culture of the earth, to which it is never more reſtored. In the higher claſſes, the fear of what faſhion has rendered a ſort of luxury, prevents marriages and propagation. The ſuperfluous conſumption of a great quantity of commodities by a ſmall number, deprives poſterity of it's ſupport, and clogs it with a load it hardly ever gets the better of. Let us add, the uſeleſs keeping of ſo many horſes, which robs men of their ſubſiſtence, thoſe country-ſeats, thoſe vaſt gardens, thoſe extenſive walks, thoſe immenſe parks, which ſpread ſterility over a whole

whole country; and we ſhall ſee how mortal an enemy luxury is to population, agriculture, and induſtry.

WHAT cauſe depopulated Italy in the time of the Roman emperors, and threw it into that inconceivable languor, which rendered it the prey of barbarians? It was luxury: it was the number of villas, with which thoſe maſters of the world covered fruitful lands, and turned them into deſarts: it was the ſwarms of idle ſlaves, with which thoſe haughty tyrants filled their houſes.

LUXURY corrupts the morals of men. This truth, adopted without proof by all the ethic writers, has not always been rightly conſidered. Upon ſeeing the eaſe, the expence, the magnificence of a nation, corruption has immediately been exclaimed againſt. Yet morals may ſubſiſt with a proportioned expence; it is only luxury, properly ſo called, which vitiates. Fancies, by their nature, are not fixed: they

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fly from object to object. Luxury occaſions continual variations of taſte and manners: the ſpirit of inconſtancy and levity becomes habitual, and takes place in even the graveſt and moſt important things. Manners change inceſſantly, and thoſe changes cannot contribute to mend them. The expence which luxury requires, inflames cupidity. Money is run after, and purchaſed at any rate. From the moment that this mercenary greedineſs poſſeſſes the maſs of a nation, virtue becomes ridiculous, honour is a chimera. Merit is weighed by gold: dignities and employments are valued only in proportion to the money they bring in. The vigour of the laws yields to the impulſe of riches. In this general depreſſion, a fatal calm takes place, which looks like proſperity, but forebodes a violent ſtorm, juſt ready to overturn the ſtate.

LUXURY debaſes the ſoul and the mind. Our ſoul is tempered by our education, by thoſe that are about us, and by our occupations,

tions. If that education aims at nothing more than the acquiſition of little agreeable talents, the only ones ſought after in the ages of luxury, the ſoul remains confined within that narrow circle of little things. Entering into the world, one is ſurrounded with frivolous, tinſel beings, which, with mere nothings, ſteal away the regard due to merit. It requires a ſuperior ſtrength of mind, not to be dragged along by the torrent of bad example, and not to be tempted to acquire an eaſy merit, inſtead of that which coſts ſo much labour. Our occupations, in times of luxury, are, gain and pleaſure. A habit of pleaſure weakens the ſoul, and the deſire of gain never led to any thing great. An immoderate cupidity bends rather to intrigues, to meanneſſes, and ſervitude. Effeminacy too, the immediate follower of luxury, by enervating the vigour of both the body and the mind, vilifies the ſoul, by obſtructing the exertion of it's ſtrength,

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and hindering it from attaining to it's deſtination.

THE debaſing of the mind is as certain an effect of luxury, as the degrading of the ſoul. The mind receives the ſame impreſſions from all that ſurrounds and all that occupies us. Trifling ages give trifling habits. A mind taken up only with little things, does not even imagine the exiſtence of what is really great and fine, and wants both the will and the power to attain that height. The important buſineſs of running after falſe pleaſures and riches, takes up too much time, to leave a few moments for the culture of talents. Knowledge is the appanage of the unfortunate, whoſe mediocrity bars the way of fortune to them. The inconſtancy and the levity of our manners influence learning and the arts. Men no longer ſeek that which is fine, but that which is pretty. All is turned into gew-gaws. The learned are abſorbed in elegant trifles. Authors deco-

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rate their writings with new and extraordinary phraſes, to gratify the levity of their readers, and neglect thought. Artiſts, inſtead of following the rules of art, ſubmit ſervilely to the caprices of a depraved taſte. The degradation of the ſoul, and the contempt of virtue, complete the unhinging of the faculties of the mind. Let not men deceive themſelves: virtue is more neceſſary in every exertion of the mind, than the vulgar imagine. A vicious and corrupt man, who aſpires to genius, obtains but a partial ſucceſs: and if ſuch a man, convinced of the neceſſity of ſeeming to be full of ſentiments intereſting to humanity, attempts to make a ſhew of them, he does not ſucceed. He is like harlequin in a biſhop's dreſs, who cannot give his bleſſing with dignity.

THE experience of all ages and all nations proves, that the introduction of luxury brings on the decline of the arts and of learning. Corruption of taſte keeps equal

equal pace with corruption of manners. No people immerſed in luxury and pleaſure, ever diſtinguiſhed themſelves by their genius and talents. The glory of the Romans had ſcarce attained it's meridian luſtre, when the luxury of their emperors obſcured it's ſplendor, and ſoon effaced it's brightneſs. The writings in the times of the firſt emperors atteſt too well the then decadency of genius: there were a Pliny and a Martial, inſtead of Cicero and Horace. If we judge of the progreſs of luxury by the productions of our days, we are farther gone in the high-road of corruption, than our politicians ſeem willing we ſhould think.

The panegyriſts of luxury combat facts, and find in the increaſe of capital cities, and the concourſe of inhabitants which luxury brings to them, an effectual way to make the ſciences and arts flouriſh. This concourſe, ſay they, occaſions wants, and facilitates the communication of knowledge.

ledge. The immoderate ſize of capital cities is of no utility with reſpect to the public good, and it is more than doubtful whether it be of any ſervice to the ſciences and to learning. The great men of a nation ſeldom ſpring from the boſom of the capital: they are produced in the country, where a more ſimple way of life permits the infant genius to ſtrengthen itſelf in ſilence, afterwards to ſhine in a more conſpicuous place. How can a great genius be formed in the midſt of the capital of a people devoted to luxury? The great man, to be borne with there, muſt put on the appearance of frivoloufneſs. It is demanded of the moſt ſublime talents to be amiable, and that by the help of arbitrary graces, the acquiſition of which requires time. Men of genius are forced into the common round of middling ſocieties, put out of their way by numberleſs minute attentions which are expected, dragged out of complaiſance to thoſe tireſome amuſements

ments which are called pleaſures. In contracting themſelves by this contagious mediocrity, they loſe the time and taſte for true glory. Yet the deſire of glory, retirement, and meditation, are as neceſſary to genius, as the vanity and diſſipation of luxury are contrary to it.

LUXURY extinguiſhes the courage and the military ſpirit of a nation. Courage depends, either on a machinal inſtinct, an inward feeling of our own ſtrength, or on ſtrong paſſions, actuated by the deſire of glory, or by prejudices. This inſtinct cannot diſplay itſelf in bodies effeminated by luxury, enervated by pleaſure: it is found only in robuſt bodies, hardened by fatigue, and in which a conſciouſneſs of their ſuperior ſtrength predominates. Strong paſſions do not fire weakened ſouls: the habit of little paſſions renders them inſenſible to great ones. The habitual inconſtancy of luxury hinders theſe debaſed ſouls from exerting in their enterprizes that obſtinacy

of courage, without which great actions cannot be executed. The deſire of glory is blunted in times of luxury: none are then any longer citizens; but all is mercenary. It conſequently is impoſſible for courage and the military ſpirit to be allied with effeminacy.

It is pretended, that the artificial courage of honour often anſwers the end of real courage in monarchical governments. But let it be conſidered, that this honour vaniſhes, when luxury prevails. Let us even ſuppoſe that a nation, by means of this ſpring, has ſurpaſſed herſelf on particular occaſions, in a day of battle; yet, if ſhe carries corruption in her boſom, the fire kindled by honour will laſt but a ſhort time. At the end of a campaign, ſhe will feel her diſadvantages: her armies, unable to bear the fatigues of war and the changes of ſeaſons and climates, will have mouldered away. It is uſeleſs and diſagreeable to ſcrutinize modern events. No nation

nation is yet at the height of luxury: one perceives only the beginning of the corruption; which, indeed, ſeems ready to make a rapid progreſs. But, what is certain, is, that the hiſtory of the luxury of all times, is only the picture of the loſſes and falls into which it has precipitated the people who have given themſelves up to it's ſeducing allurements. Poor and warlike nations have always exerciſed the natural right which bravery has over riches.

LUXURY prepares the chains of deſpotiſm. If luxury be produced by an inequality of fortunes, it contributes in it's turn to increaſe that inequality. The prince's fortune becomes immenſe, and the progreſs of his power follows the progreſs of his fortune. No rampart oppoſes the extenſion of unlimited power. The part of the people whom luxury keeps poor, is ready bent to ſervitude: accuſtomed to worſhip the outward marks of power, they ſubmit without difficulty to

idols armed with thunder. The cupidity of the great makes them a troop of mercenary ſlaves. Enervated ſouls have neither ſtrength nor will to oppoſe the yoke: they yield to the impulſe of fear. The ſentiment of natural equality, and the idea of liberty, diſappear, and make room for ſlavery. Let us run over our globe, and view the nations that have groaned, or ſtill groan, beneath a ſcepter of iron: we ſhall always find them the richeſt countries, the moſt favoured with the gifts of nature, and thoſe which have experienced the greateſt luxury.

NOTWITHSTANDING the cloſe connection between the effects of luxury and thoſe of commerce, which renders them applicable to both; ſome of theſe effects belong moſt properly to trade. Of this number are the debaſement of the ſoul, the decline of talents, and the extinction of the military ſpirit. Theſe effects do not indeed ſhew themſelves, till the ſpirit

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of trade and the ardour of lucre have gained poſſeſſion of the whole maſs of the people.

THE ſpirit of trade accuſtoms men to a calculated exerciſe of duties. Debtor and creditor is kept, and the account is tacitly balanced, of what is given to ſociety and to one's fellow-citizens, and of what is received from them. This mercantile calculation accuſtoms men to a ſentiment of punctual juſtice: but it removes them from thoſe generous virtues, which ſacrifice ſelf-intereſt to the public good. The habit of peace and tranquility which commerce requires, makes mercantile men averſe to the military ſtate. A trading people are incapable of being truly great, and know neither the civil nor the military virtues.

THE paſſion for lucre is the ſureſt mark of a little ſoul; and thoſe ſouls which abandon themſelves to that paſſion grow ſtill narrower and narrower. Common geniuſes are the moſt inclined and the fitteſt to amaſs riches. What benefit can

the government derive from theſe money-loving men? Thoſe who have moſt of it, are the hardeſt to let it go for the ſervice of ſociety. A nation ſolely taken up with trade, will be a debaſed nation, which will ſoon or late become the prey of it's neighbours.

WHAT I have been ſaying is by no means meant to depreciate either an uſeful trade, or thoſe who carry it on nobly, and in a manner advantageous to the ſtate: I ſpeak only of it's abuſes: of the means of finding the true value of things. The reward of care to get money, is money: eſteem is the price of merit. One cannot ſufficiently caution merchants ſuperior to their profeſſion, to guard againſt the ſpirit of that profeſſion, which, kept within due bounds, is a copious ſpring, vivifying to ſociety; but exceeding thoſe bounds, becomes a torrent, and ſweeps away virtue and talents.

IT would be neceſſary, without doubt, to

to be able to aſcertain the fixed point which ſeparates uſeful trade from that which becomes hurtful. But, in politics as in morality, it is very difficult to diſtinguiſh the nice ſhades by which good borders upon evil. It even requires a very keen eye and exquiſite diſcernment, to determine real abuſes, to diſtinguiſh them from thoſe which ought to be tolerated, and to chooſe the proper means to prevent or rectify thoſe abuſes. Trade, as we ſhall ſee, cannot, by it's nature, be ſubjected to a rigid direction.

It is equally difficult to ſee the point where expence ends and luxury begins, and to ſtop the progreſs of this laſt when it has once got poſſeſſion of a nation. Sumptuary laws, which are recurred to as a ſure remedy, produce an unexpected effect. Luxury, ingenious at finding out the loop-holes of the law, takes a bye-way, and if one channel be ſtopt, opens itſelf another. Theſe laws reſtrict too

much the natural liberty of man: they are always eluded: they ſuit, in ſhort, none but a poor ſtate, where the citizen is under the immediate inſpection of his magiſtrates, and guided by the example of their frugality.

NOTWITHSTANDING theſe difficulties, the examination of the nature and effects of commerce and luxury leads us perhaps to the ſolution of theſe two famous problems; "What degree of favour ought to be ſhewn to commerce and luxury, and how the ſpirit of trade may be preſerved jointly with the military ſpirit." It ſeems to me, in conſequence of this, that all will remain in, or return to, it's natural order, if the government makes uſe of the four following means: to protect and encourage preferably agriculture, and induſtry of firſt neceſſity: to honour merit and talents independently of riches: to keep up the military ſpirit at leaſt in a ſeparate part of the nation: to allow trade all poſſible freedom.

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It is known now, that nothing merits the attention of a wiſe government more than agriculture. It is acknowledged, that all trade which does not depend upon good huſbandry, is a building ready to be overturned by the leaſt ſtorm. It is well known that agriculture gives life to the moſt advantageous trade, that which is carried on at home; that it is the ſource of population, and of real riches.

At the ſame time that theſe immenſe advantages are obtained by encouraging this precious art, proper bounds are of courſe ſet to trade. Commerce and manufactures never become dangerouſly extenſive, but at the expence of the population of the country. If agriculture be in ſo flouriſhing a ſtate as to afford ſubſiſtence to numerous inhabitants, the huſbandman will not quit the ſolid occupation of his fathers, to which he is accuſtomed, to run after the uncertain traffic of the artificer. It is the miſery, it is the contempt he labours

bours under, that brings him to towns or cities. If agriculture is protected, trade and the arts will no longer deprive the country of any but it's ſuperfluous inhabitants, who, notwithſtanding their efforts to draw their ſubſiſtence from the earth, have not been able to ſucceed: and it is by employing only this ſuperfluity of huſbandmen, that trade keeps in it's due order, and becomes uſeful.

THE encouragement of agriculture will be a no leſs effectual means to ſtop the ravages of luxury, which, deprived of the facility of multiplying it's inſtruments, will be forced to ſlacken it's courſe. If agriculture be honoured, if the name of country-man be no longer deemed a term of contempt; the proprietors of lands will ceaſe to crowd towards the capital with ſuch impetuous haſte. Beſides the conſiderable advantage which the value of land and population gain by the reſidence of the landlord; the dangers of this conflux in

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any one city are well known. It is the capitals which are the nurſeries of luxury. The daily ſight of thoſe crowds of idle corrupted people, and the example of gawdy ſhew, irritate the fancy and excite cupidity. If the owners of lands reſide upon thoſe lands, they will be out of the way of this ſource of corruption: they will enjoy a decent fortune, which may ſuffice for their moderate deſires.

AGRICULTURE is alſo, in itſelf, fit to check luxury; and it is not without reaſon that a great philoſopher looks upon it as the ſchool of wiſdom and good morals. It accuſtoms men to a plain and laborious life: it's occupations, ſweet and innocent, bar the way to fancies, which find admittance only in idle minds. Let it not be ſaid, that a country life is repugnant to politeneſs: that is the language of falſe urbanity. True politeneſs has often been found in homely cottages. If country-gentlemen are reproached with ruſticity of manners,

manners, it is rather the paſſion of hunting, than an attachment to agriculture, which gives them that behaviour. There would be no room for this imputation, if landlords were oftener in their fields with their workmen, than in woods, or riding after their dogs.

THE protecting and encouraging of agriculture will contribute greatly to keep up the military ſpirit. The courage of the lower claſs of people is but a machinal inſtinct, allied at moſt with a certain love of their country, confounded with the love of their own poſſeſſions. It is only the robuſt labourer, hardened by toil, and by being expoſed to all ſorts of weather, that can have to any great degree an inward feeling of his own ſtrength. It is only the huſbandman that is attached to his country by the portion of land which maintains him. The artiſt has properly no country; he is ſettled wherever he finds employment: he leads a retired ſedentary life, which weakens the

the body and ſuppreſſes the military inſtinct. The great proprietors of land, beſides this inſtinct, confirmed in them by education, will acquire in the country a ſpirit of independence and of liberty, which elevates the ſoul as much as the ſervile ways of luxury depreſs it. By living in the air, they will be ſtrong and hearty, able to indure fatigue. The country Arabians, a polite people, and ſhepherds, deſpiſe thoſe of their nation who live in towns, look upon them as daſtardly and effeminate, and, after having repeatedly triumphed over them, now keep them in ſubjection.

A COUNTRY in Europe has the ſtrongeſt reaſons to favour agriculture, even at the expence of it's trade. That country, the climate of which is pure, but ſo inconſtant as to render it's harveſts very uncertain, having only a ſoil inclined to barrenneſs and difficult to till, draws it's ſubſiſtence from the earth merely by forcing nature. Such efforts require an infinity of hands; and

and if trade takes away a great number of them, the ſupport of the country will become precarious. The particular conſtitution of it's government makes all it's citizens defenders of their country. What will become of the ſafety of the ſtate, if it's defenders, weakening themſelves by a ſedentary life, loſe the military ſpirit? What will become of it's harveſts, if it's huſbandmen take to the ſpinning-wheel inſtead of the plough?

A PREFERENCE given to the moſt neceſſary induſtry will help to keep trade within it's proper bounds, and be a check to luxury. If the ſuperfluous inhabitants of the country apply to this kind of induſtry, the manufacturers who work for foreign markets, and the fabricating of articles of luxury, will hardly be able to multiply ſo as to ſtifle the more neceſſary profeſſions. Fancies, no longer finding their aliment, grow cool.

THE ſame end will be attained by honouring

nouring merit and talents independently of riches. It is common in trading countries, to ſum up the praiſe of a man, by ſaying, he is worth ſo much; meaning, ſo much money; without taking the leaſt notice of his good qualities. The inſtinct of man makes him endeavour to merit the eſteem of his fellow-citizens, to render himſelf of ſome importance. In a country where only money is eſteemed, every one tries to throw himſelf into the way that leads to money. Avidity, ſtruck with the profits of trade, runs to that ſource of riches. The moſt promiſing geniuſes will be loſt in the details of commerce, and the whole nation will become traders.

It is not ſo in a country where the government, by a wiſe attention, weakens the idolatrous veneration with which mean and vulgar ſouls are mechanically filled for riches; in a country where the ſovereign marks out a nobler way for thoſe who aſpire at diſtinction. If glory and honours

are

are the reward of merit, trade will no longer ſtifle genius, nor take off any but the ſuperfluity of men intended for ſtudy. The road of money will be no longer beaten, but by thoſe whoſe mediocrity of talents and of circumſtances does not permit them to march in the paths of glory. The rich will no longer unjuſtly uſurp the eſteem of the public: they will not enjoy it till they know how to ally merit with riches, nor till an uſeful expence ſhall have ſhewn them to be good citizens.

LUXURY ſuppoſes a cupidity and eſteem for money. Even it's fancies, and it's miſplaced expence, are only the effect of a vain deſire to equal the opinion of it's riches to thoſe of the higher claſſes. If the opinion or the pompous diſplay of riches ceaſes to diſtinguiſh, or diſtinguiſhes but little; ſenſible men will not be induced to run after petty diſtinctions, when they can arrive at greater and more ſatisfactory. A whole nation will adopt this way

way of thinking, upon ſeeing due honours and diſtinction conferred on merit.

THIS attention to honour merit diveſted of the opinion of riches, gives the ſovereign great advantages. He will be no longer ſubjected to the ruinous method of rewarding ſervices with money only. Honours and diſtinctions will be an inexhauſtible treaſure in his hands, and the expence of them will not oppreſs his people. He will no longer ſtand in need of the equivocal maxim, that great employments in a monarchy require a great fortune, becauſe thoſe employments require great luxury. Even the public may, at length, conceive, that there is more grandeur than ridicule in the ſituation of that Athenian general, who, commanding in Sicily, during the epoch of the higheſt power and glory of his country, enjoyed ſo ſmall a fortune, as to be obliged to charge his cloak and ſlippers to the account of the public money. The example of Xenophon,

who, when general of the armies of the king of Thrace, deſired no other recompence than four times the pay of a common ſoldier, will be thought rare, rather than ſurpriſing.

If a nation eſteems and diſtinguiſhes merit, it can never loſe entirely the military ſpirit. Among the virtues and talents held in honour by it, courage and the ſcience of war will be reckoned. The deſire of glory will produce heroes, whereever heroiſm is not ſlighted. In trading countries, the ſoldier is feared and deſpiſed. Rich merchants look upon the defenders of their country as their hired ſervants, as their ſatellites. It is impoſſible that bravery ſhould be the character of a nation, where the military is the ſtate of abandoned men, or of foreign mercenaries, or of ſuch as know not how to get a livelihood by other means. Such was the bad policy of Carthage: it proved the ruin of thoſe ſuperb merchants; but the example

example of their fall does not correct the moderns.

In a real monarchy, it is eaſier to combine the military ſpirit with the ſpirit of trade. Monarchy, by it's nature, implies a ſeparation of the claſſes of a people, and their ſucceſſive gradation. One of theſe claſſes ſhall be diſtinguiſhed and intruſted with the precious depoſit of honour, which conſequently will keep up the military ſpirit in a nation, even during the tranquility of peace; like a fire hid under aſhes. The nobility, an inſtitution of the barbarous times, but worthy of the more enlightened ages, is quite fit and ready formed for this deſtination. Preferring honour to all things, they prefer it likewiſe to riches; the care of amaſſing which they leave to the ſubaltern claſſes, which by that means render themſelves uſeful to the ſtate, and obtain a regard proportioned to the value of their ſervices. Trade may, without inconvenience, occupy the ſuper-

fluous part of theſe inferior claſſes, eſpecially if merit in them has room to hope for a riſe to a higher claſs. The ſpirit of trade cannot debaſe a people who enjoy ſuch a conſtitution. The nobility, properly managed, may be looked upon as the ſupport and ſafeguard of a ſtate, and as a barrier againſt the deſtructive irruption of a too extenſive commerce.

It is evident, I think, from this ſingle reflection, how much the project of a trading nobility is ill-combined, and dangerous to a monarchical government. The execution of that project would confound all the claſſes of a people, and this confuſion, leading to equality or abſolute degradation, would alter the conſtitution of the ſtate. It would become republican, or degenerate into deſpotiſm. Such a republic would perhaps enjoy a ſeeming proſperity, and arrive at great power by a vaſt trade: but it would draw towards it's fall, and fluctuate continually upon the borders of

of abſolute power. In general, nobody would gain by it, if the nobility ſhould become merchants, and the ſtate would be a great loſer: it would occaſion the abaſement of nobility, a corruption of manners, the introduction of a greater luxury, and the increaſe of riches with all it's inconveniencies. The weakneſs of thoſe countries where the firſt men of the ſtate are bankers, is well known.

TRADE has been looked upon as a means of remedying the indigence of the poor nobility; an indigence, which, particularly in France, has been painted in a manner truly fit to move compaſſion. Suppoſing this picture to be faithful, at leaſt in part, ſtill I do not ſee any reaſon for recurring to a dangerous expedient. If the government honours merit independently of riches; if by this attention, and by imperceptible methods, the legiſlature ſucceeds ſo far as to mend the morals of the people, and to cure them of that mean ad-

miration of money; if it checks and ſtrongly diſcourages luxury, and if it renders the military ſervice leſs expenſive; a gentleman, with the neceſſaries of life, cannot be unhappy: he may glory in his poverty. The military ſtate is, of all conditions, that which may be moſt eaſily preſerved from the contagion of luxury. Frugality may, fortunately, become a point of diſcipline, to which the officer ſubmits without ſhame, and of which the very auſterity enhances his merit in the eyes of the public. And if the number of indigent nobles that may offer cannot all be provided for as officers, would it not be more uſeful to form entire bodies of that nobility? A body compoſed of men animated by honour, and accuſtomed to a plain way of life, will be of infinite advantage to the ſtate, without being burthenſome to it.

SUPPOSING that theſe means ſhould not yet relieve the diſtreſſes of the nobility, and

and that ſome farther aid ſhould be wanted; will not that diſtreſſed nobility find an unexceptionable reſource in agriculture? The indigent nobles, encouraged and aſſiſted by the government to improve their own lands or thoſe of their equals, will find themſelves in a ſituation more ſuitable to their deſtination, fitter to prepare them for the unforeſeen ſervices of their country, and ſurer to preſerve them from the want of neceſſaries. It is unnatural to think of a gentleman's ſitting behind a counter: it is leſs ſhocking to ſee him follow the plough. All the nobility of Germany are not in a brilliant ſituation: there are diſtricts of that country, where their number and poverty force them to live nearly like the huſbandmen: yet they maintain themſelves without thinking of trade; and ſovereigns find in this ruſtic nobility an inexhauſtible nurſery of brave officers.

TRADE, by it's nature, requires liberty; and thoſe who exerciſe it, when left to

their own conduct, direct it beſt according to it's true intereſts. A particular inſpection on the part of government is liable to many inconveniencies. The ſovereign and the miniſter, miſled by falſe repreſentations, or intereſted ſervices, are apt to enact laws more favourable to the gain of the trader, than to the utility of the ſtate. The brilliancy of ſome particular fortunes bewitches the eyes of men with regard to the proſperity of trade in general, and the advantage of the merchant is too often confounded with that of the nation. It is certain that a rigid direction brings trade near to an open, or at leaſt a concealed monopoly. The experience of all ages proves, and the track of commerce, even now, demonſtrates this truth.

INDEPENDENT of this inconvenience, let us ſuppoſe a people to combine their meaſures ſo well, as to make them really produce a prodigious increaſe of trade; that people, as we have ſeen, labour at their own

own ruin. They will have a momentary power, followed by a weakneſs as great as their ſhort-lived ſplendor was dazzling. Trade directed may be compared to a fine ſpring forced by art into a ſpout, which, for a time, riſes to a conſiderable height, and is pretty to look at; but which is of much greater uſe, when, freely following it's natural courſe, it fertilizes the land it waters.

Of all the methods practiſed to force trade, that of prohibitions, which is only a monopoly from nation to nation, is the leaſt advantageous. If people knew their true intereſt, they would not make an under-hand war upon each other in times of peace: they would not treat their neighbours like enemies: they would ſee the people who make the moſt dexterous uſe of this barbarous way, excite and oblige others to imitate their example, and loſe more at laſt than they ever gained. Prohibitions may occaſion for a time an extenſive

tenſive and uſeleſs trade, but ſoon or late they ruin that which is neceſſary. If a ſlender reſource for the finances of a ſtate is ſought for in cuſtom-houſes, a ruinous road is taken: there are eaſier and leſs deſtructive ways to increaſe the ſovereign's revenues.

LITTLE advantage alſo is derived from treaties of commerce, which are only a war of chicanery, calculated to create reciprocal impoſts and prohibitions, or to free one's-ſelf from thoſe troubleſome ſhackles at the expence of others. The negociators who concluded the moſt boaſted treaties, ſeem to have made their country a dangerous preſent. The beſt treaty that could be ſigned, would be, that which ſhould eſtabliſh the greateſt freedom of trade between all nations.

THIS ſubject, of the direction of trade, of duties, and of prohibitions, is ſo important and extenſive, that it would require a ſeparate work; for it here comes only

only indirectly within my preſent plan. I ſhall now reſt ſatisfied with having pointed out the utility of a moderate trade, the dangers of a too extenſive one, and the uſe of ſome methods to ſtop it's increaſe beyond what is conſiſtent with the welfare of a nation. When trade is kept within due bounds, and reſtored to liberty, it will then prove the happineſs of nations, and will re-eſtabliſh the natural level of the riches of the whole world.

It is not the love of paradox that makes me maintain opinions ſo contrary to thoſe of moſt politicians: it is the love of truth. I could back my arguments with ſeveral authorities, as antient as they are reſpectable. Plato and Ariſtotle condemn a too extenſive trade. Plutarch, the wiſe Plutarch, charges Themiſtocles with the ruin of Athens. That great man, ſays he, turned the views of his country towards a marine: that marine brought on a too extenſive trade; and that trade, riches; thoſe

thoſe riches produced luxury, and inſpired the Athenians with a confidence in their ſtrength, which made them interfere in all the quarrels of their neighbours, and cauſed their deſtruction. But we do not want quotations: we want truth.

We owe the liberty which we enjoy in Europe, to the examples of the northern nations. It is alſo from the example of thoſe generous nations, that we expect freedom of trade, and the introduction of it's true ſpirit. Some phenomena which appear among thoſe nations, and which are too rare elſewhere, foretell the accompliſhment of our hopes. But in many countries ſtateſmen reſemble farmers, who, if their leaſe is ſhort, make the moſt they can of their land, without caring in how exhauſted a ſtate they leave it to their ſucceſſors. To effect the happineſs of a nation is given only to a vaſt mind, whoſe views embrace the paſt,

paſt, the preſent, and the future; and to a great ſoul, which, whilſt it loves the living, does not forget poſterity.

ESSAY

ESSAY V.

OF

AGRICULTURE.

Omnium rerum ex quibus aliquid conquiritur, nihil eſt Agriculturâ melius, nihil uberius, nihil dulcius, nihil homine, nihil libero dignius.

Cic. Off. L. 1.

OF

AGRICULTURE.

THAT we are ſlaves to faſhion, is an old obſervation, and unfortunately for us it is a very true one. That ſpirit of levity and inconſtancy, which produces continual changes in our manners and morals, is no longer confined to the limits of France, it's native country. It has diffuſed itſelf over all Europe: it has infected almoſt all nations.

FASHION, when it is content to regulate the exterior and frivolous, is a matter of great indifference with reſpect to morality. But it now no longer confines itſelf within that ſphere: it extends it's empire over the arts and ſciences. If a few

geniuſes chance to acquire reputation and honour by any particular branch of knowledge; people in general immediately apply themſelves to it, without conſidering whether it deſerves the pains they beſtow upon it. We have ſeen the reigns of erudition, wit, and geometry, paſs ſucceſſively away. That of philoſophy, and particularly natural philoſophy, rules the preſent age. When thoſe tranſient reigns are over, one is often ſurprized at the high value ſet upon certain parts of knowledge, which, in fact, deſerve but a moderate eſteem.

THERE cannot be a ſtronger proof of the unreaſonableneſs of theſe viciſſitudes, than what has happened to the moſt neceſſary and moſt uſeful of arts, agriculture. Among the Gothic remains of a military government, we prized only the talents calculated for war: huſbandry was abandoned to a ſet of degraded ſlaves, whoſe low condition caſt a reflection on the very occupations they exerciſed. In the

the time of a polite court, the miſtaken delicacy of a courtier immerſed in effeminacy, deſpiſed every thing that did not bear the ſtamp of that refined luxury which was the characteriſtic of the age. Nothing was more ridiculous than a country gentleman. Nothing terrified the nobility more than the ſad neceſſity of retiring to their country ſeats and inſpecting the culture of their lands. A man who is ſenſible that he is endowed with ſufficient talents, and who has opportunities of ſerving his country, would doubtleſs neglect his duty in burying himſelf in a rural retreat.

Of late years, the public ſeem to diſcard thoſe unjuſt prejudices. Philoſophers ſtudy agriculture, and meet with encouragement from the great. But, as men are fond of extremes, too great a ſtreſs is perhaps laid upon this art, and too much expected from it's improvement. We have authors, who preach up nothing but agriculture; who declaim againſt philoſophy, literature, the

fine arts, manufactures, and commerce, and who reduce almoſt every claſs of men to that of farmers; who propoſe the eſtabliſhment of academies, with the appointment of even miniſters of ſtate, whoſe ſole employment ſhould be on objects of huſbandry.

By following thoſe ſentiments in their extremes, we ſhall ſoon ſee the ages of barbariſm return. With a taſte turned to agriculture only, and with that entire military ſyſtem which begins to prevail in Europe, we ſhall ſoon be a troop of Goths and Vandals.

It is at all events right to examine the true degree of eſteem due to huſbandry, with the hopes which we may reaſonably entertain of it's progreſs, and the beſt means to carry it to a greater perfection. The happineſs of a people does not require every claſs of them to devote themſelves to huſbandry: it is ſufficient, if they who are deſtined to it, meet with protection, and encouragement.

AGRICULTURE was held in high eſteem by the antients. Not to ſpeak of thoſe early ages, when a groſs ſimplicity rendered people inſenſible to the charms of the pleaſing arts, and ſuffered them to exerciſe only the neceſſary ones; we find in the moſt enlightened ages works upon huſbandry compoſed by the greateſt men, whoſe high ſtation proves the value that was ſet upon the art they taught. Xenophon, equally diſtinguiſhed in philoſophy as in arms, read, in the middle of Athens, lectures on œconomics. Hiero, king of Syracuſe, did not think it beneath him to inſtruct his ſubjects, by writing himſelf upon ſo uſeful an art. The chiefs of the two greateſt republics in the world, Cato, Conſul of Rome, and Mago, Sufetes of Carthage, are, in the opinion of the antients, the moſt celebrated writers upon œconomics. Amidſt the Aſiatic luxury, and that of the Roman empire, we find valuable treatiſes upon huſbandry, com-

poſed by Attalus, king of Pergamus, by Archelaus, king of Cappadocia, by Valerius Aſiaticus, a man judged worthy of the empire after the death of Caligula, and by the emperor Albinus.

THE antients never termed that rude or ruſtic which was only uſeful; nor had frivolouſneſs then uſurped the rights of politeneſs. It was therefore natural to eſteem an art of which the abſolute neceſſity had been experienced. The Romans were more intereſted in the progreſs of agriculture, than any other nation in the world. Italy, covered with the vaſt and ſuperb villas of the great men of Rome, and peopled with an immenſe number of inhabitants, enjoyed only a precarious ſubſiſtence. She was forced to draw the neceſſaries of life from the neighbouring provinces, when her fields could no longer maintain her inhabitants.

SEVERAL events taught the Romans the advantages of a country which receives it's

it's ſuſtenance from it's own ſoil. The younger Pompey, by making himſelf maſter of Sicily, reduced Auguſtus to the brink of ruin; and that emperor, ſenſible of the importance of the granaries of Italy, made a law, whereby he forbad the ſenators to enter into Egypt. A contrary wind, or a ſtorm, which prevented the arrival of ſhips with corn, made the maſters of the world tremble for their lives. The leaſt revolt would have ſtarved them. This precarious ſubſiſtence of ſome provinces is perhaps one reaſon of the amazing weakneſs of the Roman empire, which rendered it a prey to ſwarms of the northern barbarians.

The depopulation of the Roman provinces, occaſioned by thoſe deſtructive invaſions, was as fatal to agriculture, as to the reſt of the arts and ſciences. Thoſe conquering barbarians were either ſhepherds, or huntſmen, like the preſent Tartars, and the ſavages of America. They

contented themſelves with enjoying, without labour or trouble, vaſt deſarts which they acquired by their arms. They cultivated, ſuperficially only, a ſpot of ground near their habitations.

THE revival of the arts, and an increaſe of commerce, augmented by degrees the number of the inhabitants of Europe. Large cities were built. Paſtures, cattle, and hunting, being no longer ſufficient to maintain the now numerous people, it was found neceſſary to return to huſbandry, to clear the foreſts, and plow up the heaths, and commons.

BUT this culture was managed with an unſkilfulneſs ſuitable to the ignorance of the times. It was founded on only a ſmall knowledge of nature, and on a blind uncertain plan. A better acquaintance with natural hiſtory ſhewed the inſufficiency of ſome methods; endeavours were made to remedy their defects; but the efforts were neither great, nor well ſeconded by the government.

It is to the Engliſh that the firſt progreſs of good agriculture is owing. The dearths, formerly ſo frequent in England, ſhewed this commercial and warlike people, that in order to execute their great deſigns of trade, they muſt firſt ſecure to themſelves a ſubſiſtence independant of their neighbours. After the long civil war between the unfortunate Charles I. and his parliament, England being exhauſted, ſtrenuous endeavours were made to repair her loſſes by an extenſive commerce; and in order to eſtabliſh that commerce, good agriculture was made it's baſis. The learned rooted up old prejudices, by introducing better methods, while the government made regulations favourable to the farmers. From that epoch may be dated the grandeur, the riches, and the power of England.

It is known, that a middling harveſt in this country furniſhes ſufficient food for it's numerous inhabitants for three years,

and

and a good one for five. England can by that means employ an infinite number of hands in the arts and manufactures, as well as in her armies and marine, without fear of wanting neceſſaries. That fear, as a modern writer pretends, has, for a century paſt, ſtopt France in the middle of her conqueſts: either an actual or an impending dearth forces her to make peace. We know with what immenſe quantities of corn the Engliſh have for many years paſt furniſhed ſome provinces of France. Peace alone ſecures that reſource. Dearths weaken and depopulate Spain; and thoſe dearths are owing both to the diſcouragements the huſbandman labours under, and to the melancholy ſtate of neglected agriculture.

THERE is a country, which, by the number, and bravery of it's inhabitants, ought to figure among the powers of Europe: but which bears within itſelf a principle of ſuch weakneſs, as would ſurprize it's

it's enemies in time of war. It's ſoil, naturally not a very fertile one, requires many hands to cultivate it; and even with thoſe many hands, it ſcarcely produces ſubſiſtence for it's inhabitants. Political calculators maintain, that no more than one man out of an hundred could be allowed to bear arms without ruining it's huſbandry, arts, and commerce. That country, if obliged to ſend but one man out of every five of it's inhabitants to carry arms, would never be able to make war, without inevitably bringing a famine upon itſelf. Two campaigns would reduce it to the utmoſt diſtreſs.

THE Engliſh dug in this rich mine, and drew forth treaſures from it for a courſe of near a century, without the other nations having any thoughts of imitating them. The laſt war for the ſucceſſion of the Houſe of Auſtria, ſeems to have awakened the attention of Europe. In the courſe of that war it was plainly ſeen, that the ſtrength

ſtrength and power of a nation do not depend upon that vain policy, by which, from the interior of a cabinet, through the means of frivolous negociations, uſeleſs alliances are formed, on which there is no dependance; but are often broke as ſoon as made. It was found that to be reſpected by one's neighbours, it was neceſſary to have money and a good army; conſequently a rich, numerous, and well maintained people.

WARS, inſtead of turning upon the frail foundation of the imaginary balance of Europe, are combined by the intereſts of commerce. The efforts of the great powers to poſſeſs themſelves entirely of commerce, and the reſiſtance of their neighbours, to preſerve at leaſt ſome branch of it, were too manifeſt not to ſhew the inſufficiency of that reſource. The uncertainty of arts, manufactures, and trade, for the ſupport of a people, was evident. The neighbouring ſtates need only forbid the importation

portation of the produce of the induſtry of another country, to reduce it to nothing, if the ſtrength of this laſt is founded only on it's induſtry and the export of it's productions.

A SPIRIT of ſeparation prevails amongſt all people. Each endeavours to ſubſiſt independently of others. The queſtion here is not, whether that diſconnected ſtate of nations be advantageous to mankind. It may bring us back to barbariſm. But when the ſpring of government in ſome great ſtates is wound up to the point of producing an intereſted ſeparation, the ſecurity of the leſſer ſtates requires their imitating the greater.

THE peace of Aix-la-Chapelle was ſcarce concluded, when a general ferment aroſe in Europe. Numbers of ingenious men turned their thoughts towards natural hiſtory, and to perfect arts and agriculture. The government has favoured them. The Swedes, who inhabit a country naturally barren in it's ſoil, cramped and confined

in it's trade, make ſucceſsful efforts to correct the defects of their northern climate. The memoirs of Stockholm will be an everlaſting monument of the patriotic ſpirit of the greateſt, and moſt illuſtrious perſonages in that magnanimous nation. Denmark, under the auſpices of a king born to make his ſubjects happy, imitates Sweden. Germany is intent upon œconomical projects: ſeveral of it's ſovereigns have eſtabliſhed regulations calculated to increaſe the riches of their ſtates.

In France, philoſophers make experiments in huſbandry, to which their ſovereign, like the emperor of China, vouchſafes to lend his aſſiſtance. The greateſt men of the kingdom intereſt themſelves therein. Theſe ſeeds will produce fruit in a nation where it's ſucceſs depends only upon the inclination of it's inhabitants. Spain, notwithſtanding the prejudices of religion, invites Linnæus to put himſelf at the head of a new academy, deſtined to cultivate

tivate natural hiſtory. The king of Sardinia ſends a colony of young noblemen to be inſtructed in the remoteſt parts of Germany. The king of Naples commits to a German the care of examining the natural reſources of his dominions. At Florence, an academy of agriculture is eſtabliſhed, the head of which is the firſt eccleſiaſtic, and the members the firſt of the nobility of Tuſcany, who do not think they derogate from the natural urbanity of their country, in applying themſelves to the moſt uſeful of arts.

Some academies in France, though eſtabliſhed with different views, have not deviated from their original inſtitution in propoſing premiums for matters whoſe utility is more univerſally acknowledged. They have crowned with applauſe works which inſtruct us in the culture of vines, the nature of wool, of turf, and of the diſtempers incident to corn. How much is it to be wiſhed, that other academies, the number

ber of which is already too much increaſed, would for once follow theſe examples of love of the public good, rather than buſy themſelves eternally about thoſe frivolous, abſtruſe, and worn out ſubjects, which they make the objects of their occupations. The progreſs of the Dublin ſociety ought to encourage them: and the example of the ſtates of Britany might excite in them a ſpirit of imitation. The academy of agriculture and commerce, erected by thoſe ſtates, an eſtabliſhment dictated by an enlightened patriotiſm, will be a model for the zeal, and a reproach to the luke warmneſs of other countries.

In Germany and Sweden, œconomics are taught in the univerſities; and the youth of thoſe countries enjoy the advantage of gaining, while they rummage over heaps of ſcholaſtic learning, at leaſt ſome knowledge of real uſe in life. The officers of the king of Sweden do not think it beneath them to fill the chairs of thoſe univerſities,

univerſities, whilſt the German nobility chooſe rather to ſaunter away their time idly in an antichamber, than to labour for the good of their country. The king of Pruſſia only, ever great in all his views, finds the way to oblige them to qualify themſelves for his ſervice, by the ſtudy of œconomics. The empreſs queen has juſt ſet up a ſimilar inſtitution for improving the ſcience of minerals and mines.

Will theſe redoubled efforts of almoſt all nations be crowned with the wiſhed for ſucceſs? Swift makes Gulliver relate to one of the kings of his imaginary countries all the artifices of the European ſyſtem of politics: if, anſwers the king after hearing him with great indifference, I had a man who knew how to make two ears of corn grow, where but one grew before, I ſhould eſteem him more than all your fine politicians put together. That knowledge would be admirable indeed: but is it poſſible? Does it not exceed our abilities?

There are ſceptics who doubt of the accompliſhment of our wiſhes, and who think them carried too far.

It is a melancholy thing, ſay they, to ſee the two arts moſt neceſſary to man, phyſick, and agriculture, ſo uncertain in their principles, and ſo full of conjecture in their execution. But let it be conſidered that ſuch is the fate of all human knowledge. We cannot ſee into nature, but by little and little, and by parts. Phyſick, without doubt, has not made the progreſs that might be expected from the conſtant and accumulated experience of ſo many ages. That too complicated art, dangerous in it's trials, advances but ſlowly and by degrees towards new diſcoveries. Agriculture, more ſimple, and in which experiments may be varied and multiplied without any hazard, takes larger ſtrides towards perfection. It has hitherto been retarded by a ſuperſtitious attachment to the blind track of our anceſtors.

It will not be uſeleſs to examine the cauſe of fertility in the earth, in order to judge whether all the means of promoting it have been tried, or whether there ſtill remain new means of increaſing it. Two conſiderations offer in the courſe of this inquiry: a material cauſe, which produces fertility, and the removal of the obſtacles which prevent the activity of that cauſe.

The analyſis of vegetables ſhews them to be compoſed of a ſmall portion of fixed earth, a larger of inflammable earth, and a ſtill greater of pure water. The food of plants muſt conſequently contain the ſame ſubſtances: theſe ſubſtances will be the cauſe of fruitfulneſs in the earth, which is only a redundance of food ſufficient to produce a great quantity of vegetables.

Though it is proved that ſubſtances which float in our atmoſphere contribute to the progreſs of vegetation; yet plants draw their principal nouriſhment from the earth; whether that nouriſhment proceeds

from the earth itſelf, or from the corruption of other bodies, or from what the earth is furniſhed with by the air and by rain.

The fixed earth which is found in plants, makes ſome authors think that the earth itſelf, in ſubſtance, enters into the vegetation of plants, and that a very fine earth is one of the cauſes of fertility. They alledge in ſupport of it, the known utility of frequent plowing. We ſhall hereafter ſee a more probable reaſon of the advantages ariſing from plowing.

No one who attends to the ſteps of nature, will ever imagine that elementary earth enters into the compoſition of organized bodies. We know not any example of ſuch a mixture. Salts are the univerſal agent, which nature makes uſe of to form ſolid bodies. Water, that only diſſolvent, is the vehicle which conveys the ſalts and inflammable earth into plants. It is known, that the watery part of the ſalts tends naturally

turally to a junction with the inflammable earth, and drops it's own earth, deſtined to give ſolidity to bodies. This new mixture is made by the circulation of the juices.

Of what nature are theſe ſalts? The authors, who have acknowledged the neceſſity of ſalts, have fallen ſucceſſively upon the nitrous, or the alkaline: the pure acid is manifeſtly deſtructive. But, if we have a ſalt, which unites in it's compoſition water, and inflammable earth, we have at once all that forms vegetables: ſuch is the volatile urinous ſalt. Experience agrees with theſe conjectures. Upon analyſing fertile earths, we find only this ſalt. We likewiſe know that our atmoſphere is full of it.

All ſubſtances, which contain a portion of this ſalt, contribute to fruitfulneſs in the earth. It is one of the cauſes, which render marle and all chalky earths in general proper for manures. It muſt how-

ever be owned, that nature employs putrefaction, to give this ſalt it's due conſiſtence. This is the reaſon of the fruitfulneſs of all manures, compoſed of putrified vegetable and animal ſubſtances, of ſhells, or rotten vegetables, and alſo of the black earth of woods and meadows.

Do we uſe all theſe ſubſtances actually filled with this ſalt, or only capable of producing it with a ſlight preparation? The gardeners know a compoſition, which ſhews the great fertility of growing nitre. A German gentleman, obſerving the earth thrown up by ſome workmen who were digging a cellar for him, was ſtruck with a reſemblance of the pyrites, and, to make a trial of it, ordered it to be ſpread in his vineyard, which, for a long time after yielded him a ſurprizing quantity of wine, and of a quality unknown before in that country. How many ſuch ſubſtances lie perhaps under our feet, which we know nothing of? Intelligent men lament the misfortune

misfortune of Sweden, obliged to burn her turf, inſtead of ſpreading it upon her arable land.

Succulent plants draw little nouriſhment from the earth, but much from the air. They abound with that volatile ſalt which diſcloſes itſelf by putrefaction. There are in all countries, remote ſpots of ground, which are half barren, and whoſe produce does not repay the expence of carrying manure to them. Might they not be ſown with ſucculent plants which would find ſufficient nouriſhment from the influence of the air. One might plow up the fields which are ſown with theſe plants. Their putrefaction would give the earth the juices neceſſary for the production of vegetables of another kind.

The ſecond thing to be conſidered in examining the cauſes of the fruitfulneſs of the earth, is, the obſtacles which hinder theſe ſalts from penetrating, and prevent their activity. A ſtrong, hard, compact

ſoil cannot be penetrated either by water, or by the influence of the air. The roots of plants will not be able to ſpread themſelves in it ſufficiently to ſeek their nouriſhment. Too looſe an earth does not retain the neceſſary ſalts: too wet a one drowns the vegetables: too ſour a one, deſtroys them by the quantity of it's acid.

To remove the obſtacles to fertility ariſing from a ſtiff ſoil, the earth muſt be rendered looſer. There is a mechanical way of doing this: frequent plowing, which leſſens it's coluſion, and diſpoſes it to receive the neceſſary ſalts. This is the principle of Tull's method, revived by M. Duhamel. The method is a good one: but the number of hands, and cattle, neceſſary for this increaſe of tillage, is not always to be had.

THERE are natural ways of rendering a ſoil looſer. Such is that of manures, which not only give the earth new ſalts, but by the fermentation they create in it, divide it's

it's parts when too coherent. Such is the uſe of marle, of chalk, of all cretaceous earths, of lime, and of ſubſtances which ſeparate the particles of ſtiff lands, and are ready to receive the ſalt that floats in the atmoſphere. The Engliſh, as is known, uſe theſe methods with advantage. They are well explained in the works which are yet extant of the antients relative to huſbandry, and it cannot but be wondered at, that the moderns have ſo long delayed the revival of them.

IRON is the metal which is moſt ſpread over the ſurface of our globe. There are few bodies which do not contain ſome portion of it, and ſtiff lands are full of that ore. It is known, that a ſolution of iron in common water, and mixed with ſand, forms at laſt a very hard body, a kind of petrefaction. This is the chief cauſe of the quantity of ſtones, and of that impenetrable cruſt, which render the fields of mountainous countries, where ſtiff lands

are

are common, almoſt barren. To fertilize them, that iron muſt be deſtroyed, or it's quantity at leaſt diminiſhed. Quick-lime, by laying hold of the particles of that metal, deſtroys it, or hinders it from appearing. A more perfect knowledge of foſſils may ſhew us ſtill more ſubſtances fit to produce this effect.

I HAVE often met with a kind of earth in wet places, which, by it's lightneſs and colour, reſembled the beſt garden-mould. The huſbandman deceived by that reſemblance, expected vaſt things from it, and ſeemed aſtoniſhed at the abſolute ſterility of the earth. Experiments made on it prove it to be ferruginous, mixed with bitumen, and nearly a-kin to that ſort of earth which the Swedes call mulm.

THE contrary defect to that of ſtiff is a too great lightneſs of the earth. Some ſoils, otherwiſe good, are ſo looſe and light, that one would almoſt take them for aſhes. The Engliſh remedy this defect by

by the mixture of a blueiſh clay, which, incorporated with ſand, forms an excellent ſoil. There are farms, which yield ten times more ſince this improvement has been made. Wherever there are ſprings, there is this blueiſh clay; though in general the huſbandmen are ignorant of it's nature and uſe.

The fabulous hiſtory of the Severambi ſpeaks of a method of fertilizing ſand, by overflowing it with river water. The thought is a good one, though borrowed from a romance: it was a method uſed by the Perſians. The water of a river, or a rivulet, charged with ſlime, in proceſs of time leaves that ſlime in the ſand, and binds together it's looſe particles. A meadow which is often overflowed acquires in time a ſoil quite different from that of the neighbouring fields.

In ſeveral countries, infinite pains have been taken to cultivate heaths. The ſcarcity of water in thoſe dry ſpots baffles all the

the efforts of the huſbandman. Trials have been made to bring them to a ſtate of cultivation by the help of plants, the putrefaction of which it was hoped would prove a natural manure. The perſons who have made theſe trials have been diſcouraged too ſoon by their want of ſucceſs: they would perhaps have ſucceeded with more ſucculent plants. A method might be uſed which begins now to be practiſed in Champagne, where, by the means of artificial meadows, into which every part of a farm is ſucceſſively converted, the ſterility of the moſt unpromiſing land is at length overcome. I have ſeen heaths in Holſtein rendered fruitful by planting them repeatedly with buck-wheat; and the ſands about Hamburgh rendered firm by the ſame plant with which the Swedes ſtop moving ſands.

The too great moiſture of land may be remedied by cutting ditches and channels. We have ſeen arms of the ſea, lakes, and marſhes

marſhes drained, and converted into arable land. If the wet is not ſo great as to require the cutting of drains, a mixture of chalky earths may be ſufficient to cure it. The ſame earths correct the ſourneſs of a ſoil; which proceeds from nothing but iron, and water continuing too long upon the ground. In ſeveral countries lime is uſed ſucceſsfully for this end.

LAND, to be fruitful, requires that the productions expected from it are ſuited to it's nature. It is well known that all plants do not thrive equally well in all ſoils. The experiments upon the ſeveral ſorts of wheat which grow in foreign countries, have not been ſufficiently varied. The Syrian wheat ſucceeds very well in Germany. In Sweden ſeveral ſorts of buck-wheat, brought from Siberia, are cultivated with advantage. Was it not for a kind of large millet, the ſandy plains of Meſopotamia would not be able to feed their inhabitants.

THE countries where the climate permits

the culture of rice enjoy a great advantage. A ſingle acre of land planted with rice feeds eight peaſants in China. Maiz affords a ſtill more healthy, and more abundant nouriſhment. A ſavage going to war eaſily carries with him his proviſion for two months. In Piedmont this kind of corn is the principal food of the common people; and in the neighbourhood of the Rhine, in places where it was difficult to raiſe wheat, vaſt fields are covered with maiz, and this culture occaſions a profitable trade in the exchange of cattle fattened by the maiz, for the wheat which the adjacent diſtricts produce in great abundance.

We have vegetables which ſupply the place of corn, or at leaſt alleviate the want of it. A certain plant, brought from America, feeds the common people even in the depths of the north, where one would have expected it to be a ſtranger. It is to be preſumed, that even the moſt diſtant climates have natural productions which might be familiarized with our's.

No doubt can be made, but that the culture of the moſt neceſſary of all proviſions deſerves our firſt attention. But in places which are not favourable to the growth of corn, or which abound in it, might we not cultivate plants indiſpenſably neceſſary for our trade and manufactures? Hemp and flax are become almoſt as neceſſary to us as bread. Wet ſoils produce little corn, and madder is fond of them. Some provinces of France, and ſome diſtricts of Germany, have gained riches by woad, and the greening-weed.

It is obſerved that the American iſles grow barren. They will not by and by be able to furniſh the quantity of indigo neceſſary for our manufactures, at leaſt the price of that commodity will be too high. Many plants whoſe leaves are of a deep green, contain blue as well as the anil; if the yellow which maſks that blue could be deſtroyed, by a proper fermentation. The ſophora of North-America, the production

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of a climate like that of Europe, might, in time, become a new branch of our huſbandry.

Our gardens have not yet received the leguminous plants of foreign countries, which grow eaſily, and afford a nouriſhment equally wholeſome and palatable. Travellers have, ſo long ago as in the ſixteenth century, informed us of legumes uſed in the eaſt, which have not yet been tranſplanted into Europe. We have indeed had ſome from thence, but of a kind more ſuited to indulge the luxury of the great, than to prove a reſource to a people in general. At Conſtantinople, ſeveral kinds of legumes are now raiſed, which are unknown to us. They are cultivated with very little trouble, and are of a more pleaſing taſte than many others, whoſe ſeed we have inherited from our forefathers. The Swedes endeavour to profit themſelves from this diſcovery.

All our fruit-trees are originally the productions

productions of foreign countries. Our gloomy climates produce naturally none but wild fruits. We are rich only by the ſpoils of Aſia. The vaſt regions of America ſpread before us a great variety of excellent fruits, which we may accuſtom to our ſoil. Hitherto we have exhauſted only her mines: let us alſo accept of her more uſeful, and leſs dangerous offers.

THE vine is an important object in general agriculture. Notwithſtanding it's importance, it is far from being brought to perfection. The great variety of vines natural to the ſouthern countries, is only an ornament in the gardens of our curious, without being uſed to meliorate our wine. Our love of pleaſure joined with the prevailing taſte for œconomics, ought to induce us to force our ſoil to furniſh us a liquor, the perfection of which would ſave us vaſt expences. Few places imitate the example of Champagne, which, by continual trials, a careful choice and judicious

mixture of the grapes, has attained the art of making it's wines ſo ſuperior to thoſe of former ages.

I HAVE learnt in my travels ſeveral ſecrets, which wine-merchants make uſe of to meliorate their wines. A certain prejudice prevails againſt theſe methods: they are called brewing, though ſtrictly ſpeaking what wine is not brewed? It is an artificial liquor, the goodneſs of which depends partly on the goodneſs of the grape, full as much on a lucky fermentation, and often on a judicious addition of means to aſſiſt that fermentation. If thoſe means contain nothing diſagreeable to the palate, nor prejudicial to the health, I ſee no reaſon to exclaim againſt them. It is true, we have not yet fathomed the nature of fermentation; we are yet to find the manner of directing it, and of it's concurring with the true mixture of the wine. Too ſtrong, and too long a fermentation weakens it; and if the fermentation is ſtopt too ſoon, the wine is unwholeſome.

CATTLE are equally neceſſary for the eaſe of the labourer, and for his food. We draw from domeſtic animals an infinite variety of things indiſpenſably neceſſary for our manufactures. The increaſe of cattle, and the perfecting of their breed, are of great importance to our rural œconomy. Yet we remain ſatisfied with thoſe ſpecies of theſe uſeful animals which have been in our climates from time immemorial. Thoſe very ſpecies are foreign. It is probable that the horſe and the ox came originally from the eaſt: at leaſt it is certain that the aſs came to us from the deſarts of Arabia.

AFTER ſome generations, the animals of hot countries grow accuſtomed to our climate. There are others which, if tranſplanted, might be of great ſervice to us. The turkey, and the pheaſant are proofs of this. The camel is now familiarized with the climate of Saxony. Some countries have a breed of Indian cows, which give more milk than our's, and are ſatisfied

with worſe fodder. M. Alſtrœm is now trying to introduce into Sweden the fine breed of Angora goats. The Chineſe hogs, preferable to our's, do perfectly well in the northern countries. Ponds in Sweden have been ſtocked with foreign fiſh.

The breed of domeſtic animals is too much neglected. We have hitherto given little attention to any other, but the horſe: that warlike creature, under favour of the military ſpirit of the age, and becauſe it ſerves for the amuſement of the great, has attracted the notice of government. Even the breed of dogs has been cultivated with greater care, than that of more uſeful animals: ſo much are we inclined to prefer our pleaſures to real advantages. Sweden alone imitates England, which, by continued care, has obtained a breed of ſheep ſuperior to any other in Europe, and which affords the fineſt wool: even this very animal grows accuſtomed to cold, and bears the rigid climate of the north of Scotland.

Scotland. The experiments tried in France prove, that their being expoſed to cold lengthens their wool and renders it finer.

MEADOWS furniſh the general food of cattle. There are ſome lucky ſpots, where plenty of water joined with the induſtry of the inhabitants, have formed floated meadows which fully anſwer the moſt ſanguine expectations of the huſbandman. But theſe fertilizing waters are not found every where, and it is a common thing to ſee fields when they are parched up covered with drooping herds. It has been proved that one acre of artificial graſs yields as much fodder as ſeveral acres of common meadow graſs. Yet the culture of the former is neglected. North-America produces ſeveral ſorts of graſs, with which we are not ſufficiently acquainted, and which would ſeem to promiſe an eaſier and more plentiful ſubſiſtence for our cattle. The French have not yet cultivated turneps, a plant which fattens a prodigious number

of ſheep in England. The ſenſible ſcheme of a German, who propoſed feeding ſheep in pens, as a means of increaſing the profits derived from them, has been treated with contempt. The miſcarriage of a ſingle trial injudiciouſly made by only one perſon, is frequently apt too ſoon to diſguſt a whole country.

People complain of the ſcarcity of wood, an article abſolutely neceſſary. Yet there are countries, whoſe fertile plains are covered with foreſts; plains which, if converted into arable land, would yield greater profit, and be of ſervice to population, by affording them larger means of ſubſiſting. Whether this ſcarcity is real or imaginary, little care is taken to prevent it. Scarce any foreſts are planted. Yet nature muſt be ſeconded by art. By ſowing, and by planting woods, lands might be better laid out, and trees choſen which grow quick, which are more ſuited to the nature of the ſoil, and which yield a

greater

greater quantity of wood. Trials are now making in Germany with the larch tree. England poſſeſſes plantations of oaks which ſurpaſs thoſe that are left to nature.

THERE are in foreign countries, particularly the ſouthern, uſeful trees, which might be familiarized to our climate, and would enrich our foreſts. The cheſnut, a native of Great-Tartary, and the Canadian tulip-tree, adorn our garden walks and alleys. The cedar, and ſeveral trees of Siberia, thrive in Germany. We know well what a rich harveſt M. Kalm brought from North-America. Upwards of fifty new ſorts of trees bear the cold of Sweden, and grow there perfectly well. It is not for want of wild trees of our own, that we adopt foreign ones; but becauſe theſe laſt promiſe either a quicker growth, or uſeful fruits, or, beſides their wood, are of advantage to our arts, and manufactures. The wax-tree, planted in Europe, might create a new branch of commerce: it grows

well in Germany. A ſurprizing quantity of trees, natives of other climates, grow in the open fields of England and France. A philoſopher * has lately given an excellent treatiſe on their culture.

To aſcertain the utility of methods already known, or to invent new ones, requires men of greater knowlédge, and more exalted views than the generality of huſbandmen. The lower claſs of them, confined in their education, taken up with the care of procuring themſelves a livelihood, are not cut out for making improvements in agriculture: it is the province of the philoſopher, who weighs the principles of things, combines them with facts, and from thence draws inferences for the advantage of mankind. The abſurd prejudice, which attached little eſteem to œconomical knowledge, hindered many men of genius from applying themſelves to it. The ambition of the learned found more ſatisfaction

* M. Duhamel du Monceau.

ſatisfaction in that oſtentatious and often uſeleſs erudition, ſo long honoured among us. However, that prejudice now gives way, and it is in the power of a ſovereign entirely to root it out. The reign of words draws towards an end; that of things will next take place.

ACADEMIES begin to be formed, as we have ſeen, for the improvement of natural hiſtory, and agriculture. But hitherto they are only free ſocieties, the members of which, by their ſituation in life, and by reaſon of their other occupations, will not be able to beſtow ſufficient time and application on thoſe objects. A ſcience ſo extenſive, and ſo complicated as that of œconomics, which embraces all beings, and lays a tribute upon all nature, requires the whole attention of a thinking man. It will be found neceſſary to eſtabliſh academies, or at leaſt committees of the old academies, compoſed of members to whom proper ſalaries ſhall be allowed, and who

ſhall

ſhall be employed upon the ſtudy of this ſcience only.

ANOTHER thing will likewiſe be neceſſary. Experiments in agriculture are ſlow and expenſive. A trial ſometimes abſorbs the income of a piece of ground for ſeveral years. All thoſe who deſire, and who may know how, to make good experiments, have not always land at their diſpoſal. A fund muſt be appropriated equal to the expence, as well as a ſpot of ground ſufficiently extenſive, and ſufficiently varied for theſe academic experiments ever to ſucceed. Premiums ſeldom are productive of the deſired effect: the uncertainty of obtaining them, and their ſmallneſs in general when obtained, ſuffer thoſe only to be candidates for them, who aim at nothing but honour, and the moſt intelligent are often ſo circumſtanced as not to be able to work for honour only.

SUCH an academy promiſes us alſo diſcoveries, which, though not immediately directed

directed to the practical part of huſbandry, ſpread over it advantageous influences. We have ſeen thoſe of Linnæus on the ſeaſon of plants, and upon certain diſeaſes incident to cattle: thoſe of M. du Tillet on the diſtempers of corn. A dangerous ſcourge now * afflicts Tuſcany: a kind of bind-weed deſtroys the garden plants, and already menaces the fields of that dutchy. It is the province of a botaniſt to point out the means of delivering that fine country from ſo ſingular a calamity.

The candidates for places in theſe academies cannot have too diverſified a knowledge. The uſeful ſciences go hand in hand, and lend each other a mutual aſſiſtance. Natural hiſtory, botany, mineralogy, chemiſtry, mechanics, and the common practice of huſbandry, will all be equally neceſſary to the members of the academy. Nature never is ungrateful: ſhe rewards amply the ardour of thoſe who endeavour to know her.

* This Eſſay was written about the year 1759.

THE diſcoveries made by the learned in agriculture would be an uſeleſs treaſure, unleſs they arrived to the knowledge of the land-holder, and were communicated even to the labouring huſbandman. The proprietor of land, who, generally, is a man of ſome education, and often reads either well or ill, may learn inſtruction from the tranſactions publiſhed by ſuch an academy. To inform the huſbandman, one might diſtribute a good, plain, and clear compendium of the firſt principles of agriculture, and of the methods moſt ſuitable to his country: a compendium, which it would be right to introduce into thoſe ſchools where youths of the lower claſs in particular receive their education. This method has often been, and never can be too much, recommended to the attention of the legiſlature.

LET not this project be looked upon as chimerical or impracticable. Experience proves that more may be made of the common

common people than is generally imagined. About a century ago, a German prince changed entirely the face of his dominions. That ſovereign, truly great by his civil virtues, cauſed his people to be inſtructed by a compendium of uſeful knowledge, which he ordered to be read in the country ſchools: he made his peaſants learn even drawing and muſic. Though theſe inſtitutions do not now flouriſh with their original vigour, yet one cannot but be ſurprized at the difference of underſtanding between the inhabitants of that country, and their neighbours. All it's villages have good muſic in their churches: there are few in which one may not find peaſants enough ſo well ſkilled, as to perform a concert of the beſt Italian muſic.

All the means of perfecting general agriculture remain uſeleſs, if the legiſlator does not ſecond them. Without the aſſiſtance of good laws, all inſtructions will be imperfect. The ſpirit of the government,

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the arrangement of the finances, antient cuſtoms degenerated into laws, are ſometimes ſo unfavourable to huſbandry, that nothing can be expected in behalf of this laſt, till the obſtacles are removed. But changes are avoided, their inconveniencies are feared, though, being leſs than the benefit reſulting from them, they ought to give way to the public good. Nothing is often wanted, but to will: but men do not always will rightly, or ſtrongly enough.

The chief obſtacle in regard to the improvement of land in many kingdoms, doubtleſs ariſes from the abſolute inability of the huſbandman. Poor, or weighed down with taxes, he has neither power, nor inclination to ſpend money upon a ſoil, which would return it him with uſurious intereſt. His ſoul, enervated by miſery, does not riſe above the ſphere of his daily wants: he goes, like an over-loaded beaſt, heavily, with down-fallen ears, in the track beaten by his anceſtors. There are

are countries alſo, where, ſuppoſing that their faculties, and an happy inſtinct ſhould incline the people to increaſe their induſtry, this new effort would be rewarded only with new taxes, which would over-whelm them the next year.---Happily for England, ſuch fears and diſtreſſes are unknown to her.

EVERY ſyſtem of finances, which makes the weight of the taxes fall preferably, or even arbitrarily, upon the huſbandman, is vicious; becauſe it ſtops the ſureſt and moſt plentiful ſource of the riches of a ſtate. It is not to be wondered at, if ſuch ſyſtems prevail in deſpotic governments. To lay a tax on land requires no effort of genius: that arrangement is ſelf-evident. To tax general induſtry in a juſt proportion, without hurting the ſpirit of any of it's branches, is the maſter-piece of legiſlation, and we never ſhall attain it *. In the mean

* The reader will eaſily perceive, that the greateſt part of the remainder of this Eſſay is calculated for the meridian of countries which do not enjoy the bleſſings of an Engliſh government.

time it is moſt certain, that the huſbandman ought to be conſidered and be dealt gently by: and the ſyſtems of finances which approach neareſt to this principle, or deviate the leaſt from it, will always be the beſt.

THE maxims of ſound policy do not however, perhaps, admit of diſburthening the huſbandman entirely. That would be deſtroying his induſtry. There are countries, where the ſmallneſs of the taxes does not relieve huſbandry from it's ſtate of languor. The ſame ſpirit of the government, which cauſes that modicity of taxes, deſtroys the arts and commerce. Men often want a ſpur, which hinders their giving themſelves up to idleneſs.

WE know a ſtate in Europe, where the people, without being oppreſſed with taxes, are in an almoſt ſimilar inability with that of the huſbandman of thoſe countries in which the ſyſtem of the finances is radically faulty. In that country, the people labour

labour under a load as heavy as the weight of impoſts; under that of life-rents. Idle annuitants have been too lightly ſuffered to tax without meaſure the induſtry of the inhabitants of the country. A huſbandman, a bad manager, contracts conſiderable debts: his deſcendants, finding the ſame unhappy facility of borrowing, follow his bad example: their poſterity are loaded with more than they can bear: they remain poor, and cannot extricate themſelves. This inconvenience might have been prevented; and might even yet be leſſened, by eſtabliſhing public regiſters of the lands and debts of every huſbandman. He muſt then be permitted to contract debts, only in a juſt proportion to the value of his land. All debts exceeding a fixed and moderate ſum, really neceſſary for carrying on his buſineſs, ſhould be cancelled, if contracted without the permiſſion of the magiſtrate of the place: and to prevent that magiſtrate's granting ſuch permiſſion too

eaſily, he might be made anſwerable for all debts of his authorizing above the ſum limited in proportion to the abilities of the debtor.

MEN attach themſelves only to what they look upon as their property. It is impoſſible that huſbandry ſhould flouriſh in a country where the people are only ſlaves or farmers. The diſadvantages of ſlavery have been ſo plainly ſeen, that there are few ſtates in which that barbarous cuſtom has not been aboliſhed. But the inconveniencies ariſing from the great poſſeſſors of land, who reduce the majority of the people to the condition of ſimple farmer, do not ſeem to be ſo generally perceived. This abuſe is ſo interwoven with ſome conſtitutions, that it will be very difficult, if not quite impoſſible, to root it out of them: all that can be expected, is to ſtop it's farther progreſs. To fix a certain quantity of land for the poſſeſſions of each claſs of citizens, as was practiſed in the

the antient republics, would hardly be feaſible. If commerce becomes more ſolid, and more honourable in the countries here alluded to, the property of lands will return partly into the hands of the people, as has been the caſe in England.

Some may think, that the great proprietor of land might improve his eſtate as well as the peaſant, and that it is indifferent to the public which of them is the poſſeſſor. If it was poſſible, or if it was in our manners, for the landlord to inhabit all his eſtates, the evil would not be ſo great. But how many proprietors of lands have we not, who know their own eſtates only by a ſhort viſit to them, made merely to plunder them, in order to carry their ſpoils to the capital? So long as the great ſhall place their grandeur in that idle crowd which ſurround them; ſo long as ſovereigns ſhall not think with Henry IV. of France, who did not like to ſee the mills and farms of his courtiers upon their backs;

ſo long the eſtates belonging to great proprietors will be the moſt neglected. I have ſeen people deſtroy their moſt neceſſary woods, and convert them into embroidery for a birth-day ſuit.

In caſes where the abſence or occupations of the head landlord prevent his having an eye to the culture of his land, the cuſtom of ſome countries, in regard to leaſes, is very diſadvantageous. They are made for only ſix or nine years. The farmer, uncertain of his fate, does not think of improvements, but only how to make the moſt of the land whilſt he has it. In England, on the contrary, where land is let upon leaſes for twenty-one years, the farmer does not grudge the neceſſary expences, of which he himſelf reaps a ſhare of the profit. He both enriches himſelf, and returns the land in good condition to the owner. It ſeldom happens, but that the rent of a farm ſinks after a leaſe of ſix years, and riſes after a leaſe of twenty-one.

To

To promote huſbandry, it would be right to forbid too ſhort leaſes.

Some people may perhaps imagine, that this inconvenience would be remedied by letting leaſes on condition of dividing the produce of the land between the landlord and the tenant; as is frequently practiſed in the ſouthern parts of France. But beſides that thoſe conditional leaſes are ſubject to ſo many difficulties, as to render the other always preferable; it has been obſerved by all exact calculators of the produce of lands, that, unleſs the ſoil be more than commonly fertile, a farmer cannot ſubſiſt upon leſs than two-thirds of the produce of his farm. One cannot therefore approve of ſuch leaſes, as a means to promote agriculture, or to enable the huſbandman to exert himſelf.

A modern author has proved, that fines and dues to the lord paramount obſtruct the progreſs of agriculture. The poſſeſſor of land ſubject to ſuch fines and dues, will

not be at any extraordinary expence, great part of the profit of which would fall to another perſon. Where the power of redemption, or reſcinding of leaſes, is allowed, the property in the land remains uncertain, ſometimes for a conſiderable while. Theſe rights are often detrimental, and always a barbarous dreg of Gothic government. As we have no longer that government, we ought alſo to abandon cuſtoms which are an abſurd conſequence of it. The public good, the advantage of the huſbandman, and even the convenience of the lord paramount, would be better anſwered by converting theſe dues into annual rents, and aboliſhing the power of redemption.

The huſbandman alſo does not enjoy entirely the property of his land, if he is not allowed to cultivate it according to his own underſtanding. The common diſtribution of the lands in moſt parts of the continent, in particular, and their vaſt fields

fields without ſeparation, deprive him of that liberty. An induſtrious man might find a greater profit in plowing his land, without ever fallowing it; which is Tull's method. He might judge from the nature of his ſoil, that ſome kinds of corn, or plants which ripen late, would prove moſt advantageous; he might prefer artificial graſs to natural meadows. All theſe things are cramped by his neighbours: he is obliged to be ruled by the cuſtomary ſeaſons, and by that of paſturage.

THIS inconvenience has been remedied in England by incloſures, which are the firſt cauſe of the flouriſhing ſtate of agriculture in that kingdom. The parliament grants leave to divide and incloſe with hedges all commons for which that permiſſion is deſired. But ſuch incloſures ſhould not only be permitted: they ſhould be ordered; ſince the advantages reſulting from them are innumerable. The live-hedges with which theſe diviſions are en-

compaſſed, afford wood in countries where it is ſcarce, and ſhelter the growing crops, and feeding cattle. The fields thus ſeparated are ſown with graſs, turneps, and all ſorts of uſeful and laſting plants: they are plowed as often as one pleaſes, and in the moſt proper times. In ſhort, every man cultivates his own ſpot, without depending on the ignorance or caprice of his neighbours.

THE right of paſturage ſeems to forbid this arrangement. But a cuſtom which produces very little, and is founded ſolely upon old prejudices, ought to give way to a greater public good. If that right belongs to the common, every inhabitant of the village near it will be amply indemnified, by his own particular profit, for the ſmall loſs he ſuſtains upon the total of the paſturage. If the right belongs to the lord of the manor, the public good requires, that a juſt eſtimate be made of it's value, in order to it's being converted into

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an annual acknowledgment payable by the common.

THIS prejudice in favour of common paſtures is the cauſe that much land lies uncultivated. Almoſt all villages poſſeſs very extenſive grounds deſtined for paſturage in common. Thoſe grounds, abandoned to nature, and inceſſantly ſpoiled by cattle, yield but very little profit. The wearied cattle find on them only a bare and bad ſubſiſtence, ſcarcely ſufficient to keep them from ſtarving.

IF incloſures were eſtabliſhed, one might do without common paſtures: the cattle, better fed by the produce of the incloſed lands, would thrive better, and yield a greater profit to their owner. The proprietors of commons would then be obliged to ſell thoſe common lands to particular perſons, or at leaſt to cede them for an annual quit-rent. Agriculture in general, and population, would be benefited thereby. Theſe improved lands would yield

yield a produce, which cannot exiſt by any other means. The yearly quit-rent ſhould be employed towards maintaining the poor of the common, for which, not having that expedient, ſo many difficult and diſagreeable aſſeſsments are now made.

THE ſituation of the dwelling houſes of farmers may be made to favour theſe eſtabliſhments. It is proved by experience, that thoſe peaſants whoſe habitations are diſperſed within the limits of their farms, are more at their eaſe, than thoſe who live together in the ſame village. Nothing is more natural: the former do not loſe a valuable time in tranſporting themſelves and their utenſils to diſtant fields: every minute may be actually employed: their manures are near at hand: the land is continually under their inſpection.

DIFFICULTIES are made about granting leave to build lone-houſes, leſt it ſhould be impoſſible to ſubject their diſperſed inhabitants to a proper police. If the general

neral police is good, there can be no difficulty in extending it to the inhabitants of the country, in whatever place they dwell. Perhaps this very ſeparation may prevent their corruption and debauchery.

It is neceſſary that the legiſlator ſhould direct the huſbandman in the management of his land. Often, in ſpite of nature and the ſoil, the farmer is bent upon making his own ground provide for all his wants: he is unwilling to buy any thing. The Swediſh peaſant knows his own intereſt ſo little, that he endeavours to do without wheel-wright, ſhoe-maker, or weaver. This bad cuſtom makes both the huſbandry and the towns of that country languiſh.

In England, where the huſbandman knows his own intereſt better, he applies himſelf wholly to the production that beſt ſuits the nature of his land. One county only breeds cattle, and buys it's corn of a neighbouring county, which has plentiful harveſts. This has it's cattle and butter from

from the former. In ſome fertile plains of Germany, fit for the culture of corn, the inhabitants have ſcarce any meadows. They draw their fodder from the hilly countries, where they ſell the corn of their plains. The advantage of following only one branch of culture is ſo well known, that the gardeners about London do not cultivate all ſorts of plants indifferently. Each has his favourite kinds, ſuited to the ſoil of his garden. There are even ſome, who cultivate only ſeeds.

GROUND fit for feeding cattle ſhould not be ſuffered to be forced to produce bad corn, and even of that but a ſmall quantity. Where corn grows plentifully, people ought not to turn their arable land into poor paſture. Let us however obſerve, that poſitive laws concerning the culture of land ſeem too great a reſtraint upon the liberty of the ſubject: counſels and inſtructions emaning from the legiſlator, will have the effect of laws, and be leſs odious.

If any branch of huſbandry requires more poſitive laws, it is that of vineyards. Too great plenty of wine is not advantageous to a people, becauſe it creates and encourages an inclination to tipling. Bad wine is as dangerous to the health, as to the morals and talents of a nation. People ſhould not be permitted to increaſe the quantity of ſo deteſtable a liquor. But there is no reaſon why the culture of the vine ſhould not be favoured in places where it ſucceeds: for it has been proved, that a piece of ground planted with vines maintains double the number of people, that the ſame ſpace would if planted with corn. Beſides, the ſoil moſt proper for good wine, is ſeldom fit for other productions. However, the diſcouraging of this branch of huſbandry in countries where it is eſtabliſhed, might very poſſibly occaſion a neglect of the culture of corn.

Corn, the moſt neceſſary of productions, always deſerves the greateſt attention.

tion. But the lands of a ſtate may yield the moſt plentiful harveſts in good years, and yet that ſtate may be in danger of wanting this indiſpenſable food in bad years. Several expedients have been thought of to prevent theſe too frequent dearths: the exportation of corn has been prohibited: the erecting of granaries has been propoſed.

THESE expedients are liable to great inconveniencies, and do not anſwer the deſired end. If the huſbandman knows where to diſpoſe of the produce of his fields, he will cultivate every year a greater quantity of corn. It is only when proviſions are too cheap, that he is diſguſted with his labour: his diſcouragement is ſtill more dangerous than the ſterility of the earth. To prevent theſe ſcarcities, there is not a ſurer nor a more natural way, than to allow the corn-trade an entire liberty. A temporary regulation is not ſufficient: the magiſtrate is too often deceived by intereſted reports.

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This continual flux and reflux of oppoſite ordinances likewiſe renders the huſbandman uncertain, and his income too precarious.

The Engliſh have gone much farther in conſequence of theſe principles, than any other nation. That intelligent people have not been ſatisfied with barely permitting the unlimited exportation of their corn. They grant beſides, to encourage the huſbandman, a bounty to the exporters of it, when it is below a certain price. The debates which this bounty occaſioned in their parliament are well known. Some intereſted people thought, or at leaſt called it, a burden to the nation, and contrary to the welfare of the manufactures. Whether it be ſo, let experience determine. Since the granting of that bounty, England has no longer felt any ſcarcity. The medium price of corn is lower than before, and huſbandry more flouriſhing. It would doubtleſs be very difficult, to eſtabliſh

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ſuch a bounty in all countries: an entire freedom of trade may ſupply the want of it: at leaſt it will produce very advantageous effects.

To complete the perfecting of agriculture, it will be right to add rewards to the laws which direct it. Pecuniary rewards are not always neceſſary. The ſovereign poſſeſſes a rich fund in the honours which he can diſtribute; and moſt men of landed fortunes will be better pleaſed with diſtinctions than with money. Theſe diſtinctions may be varied for the different claſſes of thoſe who have taken moſt pains to improve their lands. In China, the huſbandman who has cultivated his land the beſt of any in his province, is declared a Mandarin of the eighth claſs. Let it not be thought, that the ſouls of our villagers are inacceſſible to the deſire of glory. Nature is not ſo covetous of her gifts, as not often to beſtow a great ſoul upon the inhabitant of a cottage.

THE objects in which the concurrence of the legiſlature is wanted, in order to perfect œconomics, are many, as we have ſeen, and very complicated. They require an uninterrupted attention on the part of the magiſtrate who is to direct them. It is impoſſible that, in a ſtate of any conſiderable extent, thoſe who are charged with the detail of the government according to the common arrangement of employments, and who are already loaded with buſineſs, the weight and multiplicity of which increaſe daily, ſhould ſuffice alſo for a detail ſo complicated as that of the direction of agriculture. It is difficult for the ſtateſman to acquire the knowledge neceſſary for every branch of government.

A MODERN author adviſes making a ſeparate department of agriculture, and ſubmitting it to the inſpection of a particular miniſter. Though the importance of the ſubject ſeems to demand the whole attention of any one man, it may perhaps not

be thought proper to multiply the number of miniſters. At leaſt one could not do without inſpectors of œconomics in the provinces, ſubject to a director general, or to a court of aſſiſtants, compoſed of intelligent perſons, able to take in at one view all the branches of huſbandry, and to ſpread their knowledge over all the provinces. Henry VIII. of England ſaw the uſefulneſs of ſuch a court, and accordingly inſtituted one, deſtined ſolely to watch over the general œconomy of his kingdom.

It may ſeem to thoſe who view things only ſuperficially, that the direction of agriculture might be committed to the miniſter or council of the finances, whoſe functions have a great affinity with it. But upon examining more cloſely the ſpirit of the finances, this arrangement cannot be approved. The exchequer thinks only of reaping, never of ſowing: it's ſpirit is too ſtrictly methodical; too minutely attached to old forms, and a regular preciſion

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of accounts. It cannot embrace, with all the neceſſary ardour, eſtabliſhments which require time before they produce fruit, or in which it is neceſſary to advance money. Now it is evident, that in taking all the ſteps proper to bring huſbandry to perfection, there will ſometimes be loſſes, and articles which, perhaps, may not produce any thing. It will be neceſſary to conſider the abilities of the huſbandman, to help him ſometimes in things beyond his power to compaſs, and to wait till time re-imburſes, as it will with uſurious intereſt, the loſſes and expences.

The reflections here hazarded, are not intended as inſtructions in the detail of huſbandry. The extent of that ſubject would require a whole work for each particular article. It is a taſk which the learned may undertake; and of which the execution will do them more honour than the production of the many uſeleſs works, with which they fatigue the public. I

have only pointed out the lights in which the philoſopher, the huſbandman, and the politician, may view theſe objects.

By applying to theſe intereſting inquiries, the philoſopher will have the moſt agreeable opportunity of gratifying his deſire to extend his knowledge. The private man, who puts in practice the diſcoveries of the philoſopher, will find the ſureſt way to increaſe his fortune, and to exerciſe the nobleſt of ambitions, that of the empire of man over nature. The ſovereign, who directs and favours the labours of all, will eſtabliſh his independant power on foundations never to be ſhaken.

FINIS.

INDEX.

A.

ACADEMIES, the origin of, eſpecially the little ones, *Page* 26. General, but miſtaken drift of the modern academies of ſciences, 30. Reaſons why they do not anſwer their intended utility, 38, 288, 313. Hints for an improved academy of agriculture, 314.

AGRICULTURE the only ſolid baſis of population, and commerce, and conſequently of power, 79, 214, 249. Is now greatly patronized in France, 80. It's mean ſtate among the Gothic remains of a military government, 274. It's real value conſidered, 275. How badly managed on the revival of the arts, 280. The firſt progreſs of good agriculture owing to the Engliſh, 281. Two principal points to be conſidered in the improvement of agriculture, 291. The means of perfecting general agriculture muſt be ſeconded by the legiſlator, 317. Diſtreſſed condition of the huſbandmen in many countries, 318. Means yet wanting to complete the perfecting of agriculture, 336.

ALEXANDRIANS, (the) character of, 212.

AMERICA, conſequences of the diſcovery of, 74.

ANTIENTS (the), why often beheld by us only in an exaggerated light, 3. Had a very different idea of philoſophy,

ſophy, and philoſophers, from that of the moderns, 4. Inquiry into the cauſes of theſe contradictory judgments, 5. Treated love in a very groſs manner, 124. Knew ſcarce any trade but the œconomical, 196.

ARABIANS (the), though they tranſlated and commented on the works of the old philoſophers, and taught their doctrines in great numbers of ſchools, do not ſeem ever to have extended the boundaries of philoſophy, 18. Have made us a fatal preſent, in making us acquainted with chemiſtry, when abuſed, 19.

ARISTOTLE had amazingly extenſive knowledge and views, 31. Juſtly condemns a too extenſive trade, 267.

ARMIES, why detrimental to the nation that keeps them, 207.

ARTS, the mechanic, often the origin of the moſt ſublime diſcoveries, 205.

ATHENS, the ruin of, imputed to her too great trade, 267.

B.

BACON, wherein one of the great revivers of true philoſophy, 21. Would probably have been leſs great, and why, if he had been educated at an univerſity, 27. His project great and worthy of attention, and wherein, 59. His order of the progreſs of human knowledge, 210.

BOUNTY (the) on the exportation of corn, happy conſequences of, 335.

BRITANY, praiſe of the ſociety of agriculture and commerce of, 288.

BUFFON, a model worthy of imitation, 39.

C.

CABINETS, the modern, often filled with arrant trifles, 32.

CÆSAR's project to make himſelf maſter of his country, and the execution of it, conſidered, 66.

CARTHAGINIANS (the) character of, 212.

CATTLE, and domeſtic animals, thoughts on perfecting the breed of, 307.

CHAMPAGNE, management of the lands in, 300. A model to be followed in the making of wine, 305.

CHARLEMAGNE, wherein miſtaken in his endeavours to promote the empire of letters, 25.

CHARLES V. his project of univerſal monarchy conſidered, 69.

CHEMISTRY, a dangerous art when miſuſed, is of Arabian origin, 19. Why uncommonly well received in convents, *ibid.*

CHEMISTS (the) vanity of, in the ages of ignorance, 20.

CHINA; the conſtitution of, is founded upon philoſophy, 12. Proves the admirable effects of ſound philoſophy, upon the ſtrength, duration, and happineſs of a ſtate, 13. Two claſſes of miniſters of ſtate in China, how diſtinguiſhed, 106. Each acre of land planted with rice, in China, feeds eight peaſants, 302. Diſtinctions beſtowed by the Chineſe on the beſt huſbandmen, 336.

CHIVALRY, the origin and aim of, 137.

CHRISTIANS (the) divided by a ſchiſm of which the firſt projectors probably did not comprehend the extent and conſequences, 63. Motives and good effects of their plan, *ibid.*

CHRISTIANITY, the effects of, on the ſpeculative minds of the people of the eaſt, 15.

CIRCULATION (the) of money, how generally miſunderſtood, and what in reality, 225.

CIVILIANS (the) of the middle age, wherein ſtill detrimental to us, 43.

CLERGY (the), wherein unfit for the education of youth, 23.

CLIMATE (the) of hot countries, is averſe to an active life, and leads to contemplation, 14.

COLBERT's projects truly uſeful, and wherein, 77.

COLLEGES, wherein not calculated to produce great philoſophers, 27. The defects of a college education, and remedies are well pointed out by M. d'Alembert, 35.

COLUMBUS (Chriſtopher), vaſt effects of his and Prince Henry of Portugal's commercial projects, 73.

COMMERCE, capable of changing the face of the earth more than the greateſt conqueſts would do, 73. How far only the ſpirit of trade ſhould be encouraged, 78. Great attention of the preſent age to all objects relative to commerce, 193. The real utility, foundation and progreſs of commerce conſidered, 194, *& ſeqq.* Contributes to the progreſs of the ſciences and fine arts, 206. Needs not be enormouſly extenſive to conſtitute the happineſs of a nation, 206. Though in ſome caſes, and what, proper for it to be ſo, *ibid.* Why deemed the ſtrength and ſecurity of nations, 208. Wherein it contributes ſtill more effectually to the power of ſtates, *ibid.* Advantages enjoyed by trading countries, beyond others, 209. Diſadvantages of an unbounded trade, 209, 244. The ſpirit of trade defined, 245. Difficulty of aſcertaining the fixed point which ſeparates uſeful trade from that which becomes hurtful, 247. Neceſſity of allowing trade every kind of liberty, 264, 334. Happy conſequences of a well regulated commerce, 323.

CONFUCIUS, praiſe of, 12, 62.

CONVENTS, why the proper ſtage of metaphyſical wranglings and chemical operations, 19.
CORN conſidered as an article of trade, 334.
COSRHOES, king of Perſia, protected philoſophers, and was himſelf a philoſopher, 14.
COURAGE, definition of, 241.
CROMWELL, his project for rendering himſelf maſter of his country conſidered, 66. What would probably have been the conſequence of his poſſeſſing himſelf of the commerce of the Spaniards in America, 74.
CUSTOM, a powerful inſtinct, the effects of, 204,

D.

D'ALEMBERT (M.) has well pointed out the defects of a college education, and it's remedies, 35.
DENMARK intent on improving the arts and agriculture, 286.
DESCARTES, wherein a reviver of true philoſophy, 21. Would probably have been leſs great, and why, if he had been educated at an univerſity, 27. His project great and worthy of attention, and wherein, 59.
DE WITT (JOHN) fell a victim to a too pure and too exalted reaſon, 101.
DOCTORS, the origin of, 17.
DRAKE, probable conſequence of the project of, for England's poſſeſſing herſelf of the commerce of the Spaniards in America, 74.
DUHAMEL, a model worthy of imitation, 39.

E.

EARTH (the) cauſe of the fertility of, examined, 291.
EDUCATION, why apt to miſlead us in regard to our opinions

nions of the antients, 4. The education of the moderns compared with that of the antients, 22, *& ſeqq.* Philoſophers, of the higheſt rank, did not formerly think it beneath them to aſſiſt in the education of youth, 29. Inſtances thereof, *ibid.* Means by which the education of youth might be greatly improved, 34. Reflections on the nature and tendency of our ſecond education, it's general defects, and means of remedying them, 35, *& ſeqq.* Farther defects of modern education, 91, 150. That of women in particular blamed, 151. Happy conſequences of giving them a better, 164. Effects of luxury on education, 236.

EFFEMINACY, the miſchievous effects of, 236, 242.

EMPERORS, the Roman, afford a greater number of ſcholars than of ignorant men, 41.

ENGLAND, the way for the power of, prepared by the diſcovery of America, 74. Knows now, that agriculture is the only ſolid baſis of population and commerce, and conſequently of her power, 79. Owes her progreſs in good huſbandry to the inſtructions and example of Milton's friend, Hartlib, *ibid.* Why leſs populous now than ſhe was in the fifteenth century, 216. One year's middling harveſt furniſhes her with ſufficient food for three years, and a good one for five, 281. Excellent management of huſbandry in England, 331.

ENTHUSIASTS only can dream of the impoſſible neceſſity of deſtroying our paſſions, 117.

EPICURUS, the philoſophy of, praiſed, 27. His ſchool revived by ſeveral great men in France, and particularly whom, 28.

ETIQUETTE (the) of courts, wherein idle and prejudicial, 42.

F.

FACULTIES (the) of divinity, civil law, and phyſick, when firſt diſtinguiſhed and ſeparated, 26.

FANATICISM, the danger of, particularly in matters of love, 133, 139, 177. Remarks on the fanaticiſm of the paper credit uſed in Europe, 226.

FASHION, the dangers of, 273.

FERMENTATION, the doctrine of, not yet rightly known, 306.

FINANCES, hints for the proper regulating of, 319.

FLORENCE, praiſe of the academy of agriculture at, 287.

FOPPERY, the pedigree of, 130.

FRANCE would probably have been rendered happy by ſome of Marſhal Vauban's and the Abbé de St. Pierre's projects, if they had been duly attended to and purſued, 80. Her vaſt progreſs of late years, in ſeveral eſſential branches of trade, *ibid.* And in huſbandry, 286.

FRANCIS I. of France, gallantry of, to the women, 139, 176.

G.

GALLANTRY, the origin and character of, 140, 149. Poiſons the very ſource of our greateſt and moſt rational pleaſures, 152. The preſent mode of gallantry highly prejudicial to individuals and to ſociety, 155.

GENIUS, definition of, 86. Why rare in the ſcience of government, 91. And why too often diſcountenanced by the great, 105. Is ever loudly called upon to fill up the chaſm which a miſtaken ſyſtem of politics leaves open, 111. Mark of it's decadency under the firſt emperors of Rome, 239.

GERMANY, œconomics taught in the univerſities of, 288. Has an inſtitution for improving the ſcience of minerals and mines, 289.

GOERTZ's project to raiſe Sweden only momentary, and why, 71.

GOLD AND SILVER, the effects and operations of, in trade, and on a nation, 201. The poſſeſſion of them now abſolutely neceſſary, 207. A ſuperabundance of theſe metals the real cauſe of the languiſhing ſtate of Spain, 222.

GOVERNMENT, the ſcience of, not yet thoroughly known, it's maxims verified, nor their uſes fixed, 55. Qualities requiſite to govern well, 90. Effects of the form of government on love, 127, 135. The feudal government derived from the Tartars, 136. Bad conſequences of it exemplified, 138.

GREEKS (the) were ſhockingly groſs and diſguſting in their way of conſidering and treating love, 125. General idea of their religion, 134. Owe to their taſte for the arts and ſciences that noble ſimplicity for which we admire them, *ibid.*

H.

HARTLIB cemented the grandeur of England by his attention to huſbandry, 79.

HENRY IV, of France, the reality of the grand project aſcribed to him doubted, and why, 70.

HENRY (Prince) of Portugal, vaſt effects of his and Chriſtopher Columbus's commercial projects, 73.

HISTORY, wherein capable of vaſt improvements, 46. Good hiſtory yet remains to be written, and probably will ever continue ſo, with the reaſon why, 88.

HUSBANDRY. See AGRICULTURE.

I.

JAPAN, a proof that a nation may be happy with only a home-trade, 206.

JEALOUSY the natural conſequence of the ſlavery of women in deſpotic countries, 129. The paſſion of jealouſy conſidered in it's origin, effects, and cure, 179.

ILITCHOU-TSAI, a juſtly famous Tartar philoſopher, the praiſe and character of, 18.

IMAGINATION (the) wherein often deceived, 3. Dangers of a ſtrong imagination not accompanied with equal ſtrength of judgment, 82.

INCLOSURES of land, the benefit of, manifeſted in England, 327.

INSTINCT the true ſource of our paſſions, 119, 180. And of our happineſs or miſery, 204.

IRON, the effect of, on land, 297.

JUBA, the writings of, held in high eſtimation by the antients, 41.

JULIAN, the emperor, an ornament to the throne and to philoſophy, 11.

JUSTI, a model worthy of imitation, 39.

K.

KALM (M.) has enriched Sweden with upwards of fifty new ſorts of trees, natives of North-America, 311.

L.

LACEDEMONIANS (the) why fit to receive the inſtitutes of Lycurgus, 66. Wherein miſrepreſented to us, 177.

LAND, the riſe of the value of, conſidered, 223. Should afford

afford the farmer, for him to live, at leaſt two thirds of it's produce, 325.

LAW's project, commonly called the ſyſtem, conſidered, 78.

LEASES of land, diſadvantageous cuſtom of ſome countries in regard to, 324.

LEGISLATION may be greatly improved by the application of true philoſophy, 46. Inquiry how far it may be aſſiſted by a proper direction of the paſſion of love, 171, 178. Muſt ſecond agriculture, for it to flouriſh, 317, 331.

LEGISLATORS, what ſort of men in the moſt diſtant ages, 6. An eternal truth ever to be conſidered by them, 179.

LEIBNITZ would probably have been leſs great, and why, if he had been educated at an univerſity, 27.

LIBERTINISM defined and exploded, 142.

LINNÆUS, a model worthy of imitation, 39. Invited by Spain to put himſelf at the head of a new academy for the improvement of natural hiſtory, 286.

LOCKE, one of the great revivers of true philoſophy, 21. Would probably have been leſs great, and why, if he had been educated at an univerſity, 27. Happily relieved England from the dangerous diſorder of a bad coinage, 111.

LOVE, the moſt univerſal and moſt active of all paſſions, 116. It's origin defined, 119, 143. Falſe opinions concerning it, 121. It's ſtate in the different ſtages of ſociety, 123. How affected by the form of government, 127; and by religion, 132. Is influenced by the culture of the arts and ſciences, 134. The preſent mode of treating love highly abſurd and unnatural, 141. Deſerves the attention of the legiſlator and the philoſopher, 155, 157.

155, 157. Definition of love rightly underſtood, 169. How far capable of being employed as a principal ſpring of legiſlation, 171, 178.

LUXURY, the natural tendency of, 125, 131. Difficulty and dangers of ſetting bounds to it, 158. Conſiderations how far it may be uſeful to a nation, 195, 202. Is the neceſſary conſequence of an over-grown trade, 210. And has never failed to ruin the nation where it prevailed, 212. Is the moſt dangerous effect of the increaſe of riches, 227. Proper meaning and extent of the term luxury, *ibid.* It's birth, character, and effects traced, 228. Difficulty of fixing the point where laudable expence ends and luxury begins, 247. Attempt to ſolve the two famous problems, *viz.* what degree of favour ought to be ſhewn to commerce and luxury, and how the ſpirit of trade may be preſerved jointly with the military ſpirit, 248.

LYCURGUS, his inſtitutions conſidered, 66, 177, 184.

M.

MAHOMET, character of the religion of, 62. His dogmas unfavourable to women, 133.

MANGO LAPAC, founder of the kingdom of Peru, praiſe of, 63.

MARCUS AURELIUS, an ornament to the throne, and to philoſophy, 11.

MARRIAGE, why moſt ſecure in republics, 127. Requiſites to render the marriage ſtate more honourable and happy, 170.

MAUPERTIUS would probably have been leſs great, and why, if he had been educated at an univerſity, 27.

MINISTERS OF STATE, modern, too narrow in their views,

views, 46. Should be philoſophers, 48. Difference between thoſe who have ſeized the proper opportunities when they have offered, and thoſe who have known how to make them offer, 98. Two claſſes of miniſters of ſtate in China, how diſtinguiſhed, 106. Great diſadvantages which our miniſters labour under, 107. Method to remove them, 108.

MITHRIDATES, the writings of, highly eſteemed by the antients, 41.

MONACHISM, the origin, progreſs, and eſſence of, 16. The authors of the Popiſh monaſtic orders fanatics, 66.

MONEY, the circulation of, conſidered, 223.

MONTAGNE would probably have been leſs great, and why, if he had been educated at an univerſity, 27.

MORALITY holds the firſt place in true philoſophy, 44.

N.

NANTES (the revocation of the edict of), wherein productive of general good, 77.

NAPLES, the king of, promotes the improvement of natural hiſtory, 287.

NATION (a) wherein the real ſtrength of, conſiſts, 209.

NATURALISTS, the conduct to be obſerved, to clear them of the imputation of being frivolous, 39.

NEWTON, one of the great revivers of true philoſophy, 21. Would probably have been leſs great, and why, if he had been educated at an univerſity, 27.

NICOLE, his reproof of Paſcal, 32.

O.

ODIN, the great legiſlator of the north, outlines of the doctrine of, 136.

P.

PAPER-CREDIT, the miſchiefs of, 226.
PASCAL, how reproached by Nicole, 32.
PASSIONS (the) none but enthuſiaſts can dream of the impoſſible neceſſity of deſtroying, 117. Erroneous method of judging of the nature of, 118. Origin of the falſe diſtinction between natural and artificial paſſions, 119. Love, the moſt univerſal and moſt active of all paſſions, 116. To render men virtuous, the end, uſes, and proper bounds of their paſſions ſhould be explained, 163. It is eaſy to make the paſſions degenerate into fanaticiſm, 176. Our paſſions muſt not be put in oppoſition with our duties, 179. It is their nature not to ſtop till they meet with ſome inſuperable obſtacle, 210. Strong paſſions do not fire weakened ſouls, 241.
PERSIA for ever benefited, and wherein, by the great Zoroaſter, 7. Glorious occupation of her nobles when diſgraced at court, 37. Reaſon why antient Perſia never produced one man whom hiſtory has thought worth recording, 212. The Perſian method of fertilizing ſand, 299.
PERU, the kingdom of, ſurpriſingly powerful and extenſive, for the time of it's duration, 63.
PETER THE GREAT, the project of, for uniting the Caſpian to the Black Sea, wherein infinitely dangerous to the liberties of the old world, had it ſucceeded, 75. His civilizing his nation right, and why, 76.
PHILIP II. his project of univerſal monarchy conſidered, 69.
PHILIP V. Marſhal Vauban's project in favour of, wherein

the moſt dangerous for Europe of any that ever was formed, 75.

PHILOSOPHER, a moſt reſpectable character amongſt the antients, 4, 8. Slighted and miſrepreſented by the moderns, 5. Philoſophers repreſented as the chiefs and legiſlators of their reſpective countries, in diſtant ages, 6. The modern ones too apt to be taken up with very trifles, 21. The reaſon why, 22. Philoſophers, of the higheſt rank, did not formerly think it beneath them to aſſiſt in the education of youth, 29. Inſtances thereof, *ibid.* The name of philoſopher ſtrangely debaſed now, and wherein, 32. Affinity between the philoſopher and the projector, 59.

PHILOSOPHY, why ſeen in a very different light by the moderns from what it was by the antients, 5. Curſory view of the different ſtages of philoſophy in it's progreſs from the antients down to us, and of it's great utility to mankind, 6, *& ſeqq.* Cauſe of the difficulty with which philoſophy gained admittance among the Romans, 10. Is the foundation of the conſtitution of China, 12. It ſurvived the ruin of the Roman empire, and penetrated even among the barbarians, 13. Was infected, and how, in Aſia and Africa, with the vices incident to hot climates, 14. It's fate among the Arabians, 17. It's condition after the taking of Conſtantinople, 20. By whom revived, and how far, 21. The modern method of proceeding, in regard to philoſophy, compared with that of the antients, 22. Natural philoſophy too much attended to now-a-days, and the practical too much neglected, 30. Requires rather time and labour, than genius, and why, *ibid.* Probable ways to reſtore philoſophy

ſophy to her antient ſplendor, 34. Reaſons why true philoſophy does not ſhine now as it ought, 40. Philoſophy defined, 44. Encomium of it, 134. Natural philoſophy the prevailing paſſion of the preſent age, 274.

PLATO, his opinion of trade, 267.

PLINY, the knowledge and views of, amazingly extenſive, 31.

PLUTARCH, the opinion of, concerning trade, 267.

POLITENESS, how acquired, 152.

POLITICIANS, all the greateſt, have ruſhed at once into their buſineſs, 44. Miſtaken notions of moſt of the modern ones, 46, 267. Qualities neceſſary to be poſſeſſed by them, 90.

POLITICS (the), why, of all the ſciences, that which has been brought the leaſt towards perfection, 87. Qualifications requiſite for a man to ſucceed in the politics, 90.

POMPEY, his project impracticable, and why, 67.

POPES (the) encourage and avail themſelves of the inſtitution of little academies, 26. Their project to attain univerſal monarchy, one of the vaſteſt that ever was formed, 68.

POPULATION, the eaſe of the people, and their induſtry, the only real riches of a nation, 209.

PREJUDICES are always a ſentiment of barbariſm, 57; and ſhould be corrected, 58. In what manner, 101, 329.

PROHIBITIONS are, and wherein, detrimental to trade, 265.

PROJECT (a) definition of, 54. Zoroaſter's book of the Zend one of the fineſt of projects, and the moſt reſpectable monument of antiquity, 61. Benefits reſulting from that of Confucius, 62. From that of Mahomet, *ibid.*

From that of the ſchiſmatics who divided the Chriſtian church, 63. Character of Count Zinzendorff's project, 64. Projects have their ampleſt field, and why, in matters of government and politics, 65. Lycurgus's project conſidered, 66. Cæſar's project conſidered, *ibid.* Cromwell's project conſidered, *ibid.* The project of the Popes conſidered, 67. That of Charles V. and his ſon Philip II. conſidered, 69. The reality of the grand project aſcribed to Henry IV. of France doubted, and why, 70. Reaſons why Gœrtz's project could be only momentary in it's effect, 71. Vaſt effects of the projects of prince Henry of Portugal and Chriſtopher Columbus, 73. Marſhal Vauban's project, wherein the moſt dangerous of all for Europe, 75. A commercial project of Peter the Great, wherein infinitely dangerous to the liberty of the old world, 75. His civilizing his nation right, and why, 76. Colbert's projects, why great and good, 77. Law's project conſidered, 78. Good projects are often propoſed by private perſons, 79. Requiſites to form a good project, 85, 93.

PROJECTORS, by no means deſerve the reproachful prejudice of the vulgar againſt them, 34. Their utility to a ſtate, 58. Have done ſervice, and wherein, to the Chriſtian church, 63. Cauſes of the ridicule commonly thrown on their occupation, 81. Good ones juſtified, 85. Will always be valuable in the eyes of thoſe who know how to diſtinguiſh merit, 92.

PRUSSIA, the king of, obliges his officers to ſtudy œconomics, 289.

R.

RALEIGH, probable conſequences of the project of, for England's taking from the Spaniards the commerce of America, 74.

RELIGION; a good one, or a bad one, determines the happineſs or miſery of a people, and which the beſt among the falſe ones, 61. Character of the religion of Zoroaſter, *ibid.* Of that of Confucius, 62. Of that of Mahomet, *ibid.* Of that of Mango-Capac, 63. Why leſs liable to the innovations of projectors, than government and the politics, 65. It's influence on love, 132. Outlines of the doctrine of Odin, the great legiſlator of the north, 136. Fate of all religions founded on voluptuouſneſs, 176.

RICHES, cauſe and effects of the unequal diſtribution of, 201. Real riches now inſufficient, and why, 207. The love of riches incompatible with the deſire of true glory, 211. An increaſe of the ſigns of riches a fallacious indication of the welfare of a ſtate, 218. The productions of the earth, and of induſtry, the only real riches, 220. Riches introduce luxury, 227.

ROMANCE, unpardonable defect in the writers of, 153. Wherein romances may be rendered truly uſeful, 161.

ROMANS (the), why once averſe to the introduction of the ſpirit of philoſophy amongſt them, 10. Had afterwards philoſophers, and whom in particular, among the greateſt men of the empire, 11. Their manner of treating love, 126. General idea of their religion, 134. Held trade in contempt, and why, 196. Luxury the cauſe of their ruin, 234. Why more intereſted in the progreſs of agriculture, than any other nation in the world, 278.

S.

SAGES (the) of antient Greece, why hardly to be reckoned among the number of philoſophers, 6.

St. Pierre (the Abbé de) great tendency of ſome of the projects of, had they been liſtened to and tried, 79.

Salts the univerſal agent which nature makes uſe of to form ſolid bodies, 290.

Sardinia, the king of, patronizes the ſtudy of natural hiſtory and agriculture, 287.

Schism (the) which divides the Chriſtian church, remarks on, 63.

Scholastics, the origin of, 17. Their inſtructions tend to cramp the mind, 27.

Sciences, intrinſic value of the, unfortunately not equitably rated by the public, 38.

Shaftesbury would probably have been leſs great in philoſophy, and why, if he had been educated at an univerſity, 27. Was educaced by Mr. Locke, 29.

Sovereigns, in general, why leſs well inſtructed now, than they were in former times, 40 & *ſeqq.* Muſt be truly great to know how to chooſe great miniſters, 103. Miſtaken policy of the ſovereigns of Europe, 214. Means by which ſovereigns may moſt advantageouſly honour and diſtinguiſh merit, 257.

Spain, the languiſhing ſtate of, owing to a ſuperabundance of gold and ſilver, 222. And to a neglect of agriculture, 282. Invites Linnæus to put himſelf at head of an academy for the improvement of natural hiſtory, 286.

Statesmen, the general character of, 56. Difference between thoſe who have ſeized the proper opportunities when

when they have offered, and thoſe who have known how to make them, 98. Great diſadvantages which ſtateſmen now labour under, 107. Sketch of a plan to remove them, 108. Wherein like farmers with a ſhort leaſe, 268.

SULLY, why obſtinate in oppoſing the introduction of the ſilk manufacturers into France, 104.

SWEDEN intent on improving the arts and agriculture, 285. Œconomics taught in it's univerſities, 288. Is now poſſeſſed of a breed of ſheep which affords extremely fine wool, 308.

SWISSERLAND, in danger of being eſſentially hurt in her trade by France, 80.

T.

TARTARS (the) had a great philoſopher in their juſtly famous Ilitchou-Tſai, 18. Saved Europe from the danger it was threatened with by a commercial project of Peter the Great, 76. Conjectures on their migration into Europe, 135.

THEMISTOCLES, wherein charged by Plutarch with having cauſed the ruin of Athens, 267.

THEODOTUS, king of the Goths, protected philoſophers, and was himſelf a philoſopher, 14.

THEOPHRASTUS infinitely ſuperior to our modern makers of experiments, 31.

TRADE. *See* COMMERCE.

TURKS; remarks on their manner of treating women and love, 129.

U.

VAUBAN (Marſhal), the project of, in favour of Philip V. of Spain, wherein the moſt dangerous that ever was formed, for the liberties of Europe, 75. Tendency of ſome of his projects for France, had they been liſtened to, 80.

VEGETABLES, the uſes of many ſorts of, 301. Some which would be ſerviceable to this country, not yet introduced here, 304.

VEGETATION, the principles of, examined, 291.

VINE (the) importance of, with hints for meliorating wine, 305.

UNIVERSITIES, wherein not calculated to produce great philoſophers, 27.

W.

WAR, by what now combined, 284.

WICKENGARS (the) a ſociety of pirates, the origin and principal drift of, 137.

WINE, remark on what is commonly called brewing of, 306.

WOMEN, the unhappy ſtate of, in deſpotic countries, 128. Have ſometimes, and why, in monarchies, a great influence in affairs, 131. Luxury an enemy to their welfare, 132. Why held in contempt by the muſulmen, 133. Sentiments of the barbarians of the North concerning women, 136. Were the principal object of chivalry, 137. Their obligations to Francis I. of France, 139. Caution to the fair ſex, 147. Their merit the only means by which the legiſlature can regulate the paſſion

passion of love, so as to turn it to advantage of the morality and the manners of the men, 178. Great liberty enjoyed by them throughout all the Indies, 182. How capable of being rendered instruments of happiness to mankind, 190.

WORKMANSHIP, cause and consequence of the dearness of, 222.

X.

XENOPHON, the noble example of, when general of the armies of the king of Thrace, 258. Read lectures on agriculture at Athens, 277.

Z.

ZEND (the) one of the finest projects, and the most respectable monument of antiquity, 61.

ZERDUST. *See* ZOROASTER.

ZOROASTER, character and praise of, 7, 61.

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